

SHIKAR

KHAN SAHEB JAMSHED BUTT



SHIKAR

Illustrated and with Map



LONDON

ROBERT HALE LIMITED

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Forewords

by M. J. K. SULLIVAN

SITTING here in the busy whirl of industrial Calcutta and looking back over a decade, it is impossible not to feel the keenest nostalgia for those peaceful years in the Central Provinces; the tumbling streams, the sandy river-beds, the teak and the sal and the all-embracing lantana, the forest tracks, the waving juwar, the straggling, rustic villages and the smiling faces. Nostalgia, too, for the companionship of my wise, staunch friend, Jamshed Butt, with whom I trudged so many interesting miles through the countryside. Jamshed, who imparted so much knowledge, not only of jungle lore but of the deep wisdom and philosophy of the wide open spaces.

Looking through my weather-beaten diary, I see the picturesque villages vividly before me—Sakata, Khutama, Chikalda, Harisal, Tarubanda and Paraspani. What a fine ring these names have and what memories they stir! Kolka-z, Semadoh, Elchil, Repanpilli and Kandlai. Tents in a mango grove, tiny bungalows on the fringe of the forest, camp fires and the jingling of the bells as the village cattle wander back to the warmth and safety of the villages, and beyond all this peacefulness, the occasional cry of the peacock and the deer and the deep-throated call of the tiger to his mate. Kanjitalao, Kantawadi, Pulighogra and Amdhana, Baladongri, Gawasen and Jamshed, all names steeped in the romance of the Indian jungle, portraying ruggedness and beauty, patience, selflessness and courage.

And how fitting, how excellent it is, that this stalwart, tireless man of few words should emerge from his jungle haunts

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and become a man of letters, to give to the world something of that knowledge and experience, which we fortunate few who have watched him and been helped by him in our humble "shikar" efforts, have already had the privilege of witnessing first hand. More familiar, as he has always been, with his gun than with his pen, and being of outstanding modesty, he is particularly to be congratulated on giving this most valuable contribution to the literature of sport and his many friends and admirers are happy to see that he has dealt with the subject with the same quiet efficiency which gained him his place amongst the great hunters of history. The aim of his pen also has proved itself to be true.

To analyse the qualities required of a great hunter—all qualities seen in full measure in Jamshed, will I trust not appear to be presumptuous on the part of the undersigned. A keen eye, a steady hand, a nerve of steel; patience, insistence on detail and knowledge of the habits of the animals sought whether with rifle or camera. Other qualities, the value of which cannot be over-emphasized, are kindness towards one's fellow-men and a sense of humour. It is Jamshed's friendly approach towards villagers, the men who have suffered serious losses through the depredations of the tiger or the panther, to the "Boda Walas" or the men who tie up the "machans", to the beaters or to the casual passers-by, that has earned him a place in their hearts. They trust him, therefore, they help him. They are not afraid, because he is not afraid; they know if anything goes wrong, Jamshed will protect them. They are cheerful and tireless because he is cheerful and tireless. These are the reasons why Jamshed's score of shikar successes has become astronomical.

To ordinary folk without all these qualities, such as you and I, Dame Fortune also proves a valuable ally, but even She cannot prevail, unless we take the trouble to study the masters. Personally, I was always very fortunate, but under the aegis of Jamshed's efficiency and advice, I was doubly so. How well I recall the tiger strolling up right under my tree from a typically

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efficient beat organized by Jamshed at Kanjitalao; the four tigers at Gawasen from a virgin beat and the "lucky" week with Jamshed's three tigers to my three tigresses.

Naturally, looking back over the years, one's memory flashes back to the exciting and the sensational rather than to the disappointments, the thirst and the foot-slogging. I can clearly see Jamshed's snap shot as we were stealthily walking up to a wounded tigress along the grassy mullah of Goneghat; the quarrel between a tiger and a bison; the furious fight between hyena and panther; the charging dying tiger and the snarling vicious panther. I have forgotten being marooned all night in the flooded jungle during a mighty monsoon storm, when the only one who had the sense to stay at home was the tiger! Then I think again and recall a jungle glade, a peaceful sunset and the first paradise flycatcher I had ever seen floating by—a long wait, no tiger, but what a more than adequate reward.

But if you do not have your fair share of luck to start with, remember, it is the planning and "detective" work in tracking down "stripes" which gives you the real enjoyment and not the rather mundane and disappointing act of pulling the trigger. Some of the most strenuous and exciting weeks I have had after some particular "villain" have only resulted in my own sore feet. You can woo Fortune considerably by proving yourself an efficient ally to Her. This book will show the way.

M. J. K. SULLIVAN

late Indian Civil Service

Aluminium Hindustan Ltd.

Calcutta

1955

FOREWORDS

by G. B. SINGH

I HAVE known and admired Khan Saheb Jamshed Butt for many years. Jamshed—for that is how he is known to his friends—was born in 1903. He started with gun and rod at the early age of twelve; shot his first tiger at sixteen and his first man-eater at seventeen. In private life a forest contractor, he was titled Khan Saheb for his loyal services to the Administration during the last war.

While his own account stands at over 150 tigers, he has supervised hunting arrangements with other sportsmen which accounted for more than double this number. He lifts a gun now only under serious provocation.

Forty years' study of wild life and hunting in the forest of Madhya Pradesh (Central India) is an experience to be respected and a record to be proud of. It is only natural that in such surroundings and environments Jamshed should have become an expert in jungle lore—in my opinion perhaps second only to the late Colonel Corbett.

Some years ago sitting round a camp fire beside a forest dak bungalow, when I suggested to him that he should build up a record of his experiences from which others might benefit, he dismissed the idea by saying that he was no man of letters. In the last few years, when similar suggestions were put forth by friends and admirers, among whom some renowned journalists from the United States of America, he yielded to pressure and got down to the task.

During the last ten years of my roaming and hunting with Khan Saheb in the jungles of Vindhya and Satpura Ranges, I do not know of one occasion when a noise heard was not correctly interpreted or a mark seen not fully understood. When Jamshed is about, one will not know of a situation which may arise in the jungle that cannot be met. He speaks the languages of all the local tribes—Gonds, Korkoos, Admibasis and is popularly known among them as Jamshed Mama



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(maternal uncle). One therefore has no difficulty in arranging beats or finding beaters. When your car or jeep gets stuck he will jump out and give it additional power. He will hold it up when you change the wheel. He will carry you across a river on his back, put you up a machan from his shoulders. He is expert in skinning animals, and, in fact, if you are keen enough, he will mount any trophy while in the jungle itself. He is an excellent cook—when he chooses to be one.

Jamshed is a person of short stature and strongly built—almost the physique of a wrestler. He has been using a weapon as heavy, strong and old-fashioned as himself—a Double Barrel .577 bore rifle which takes cartridges the size of Havana cigars.

When a man devotes his life to the pursuit of his favourite sport he can expect to learn quite a lot of hard facts, as indeed Jamshed's writing will show. He has written the stories of his personal exploits not as a boastful narrative of his own courage, but as a simple exposition of a definite study. They are the stories of a boy born and brought up in the jungle who educated himself to the understanding of Nature and they are the result of experience. This book gives the answers to all the important questions about animals, their habits and the various methods and techniques of hunting.

With pleasure—indeed fervour—I commend this book to hunting men, seasoned or novices, wishing them good hunting.

G. B. SINGH

Director, Civil Aviation Department

New Delhi

1955

FOREWORDS

by R. C. DUBE

KHAN SAHEB JAMSHED BUTT—the famous hunter of India—has asked me to write an introduction to his Shikar book. I feel proud that a shikari of his stature has chosen me for the purpose. I believe it is the feeling of friendship that has impelled Khan Saheb to make a request of this nature to me.

Khan Saheb does not need any introduction to the sporting public of Central India. Many shooting parties to these areas have been successful only on account of Khan Saheb Jamshed Butt's professional skill and ability. A man of gentle habits, stout heart, he has helped many persons to collect their first "stripes". Had he wished he could have collected for himself many more trophies than he now has, but Khan Saheb uses his gun only as the last resource, preferring to watch nature.

During my association with Khan Saheb, I was agreeably astonished to see his physical courage; not only can he deal with charging tigers and panthers but can catch dangerous snakes with his bare hands.

One would imagine that a person of such performance was strong-tempered. Khan Saheb, however, is of a gentle nature and although cunning in the midst of jungle dangers, has a simplicity of heart that has made him the victim of frauds which ruined his once prosperous timber business.

To read the experiences of such a man is not only a pleasure but a great help in the understanding of nature. I commend this book to the general public and wish Khan Saheb all success—as the Persians say, "May his shadow grow long."

R. C. DUBE
Deputy Commissioner, Sagar
(M.P.)

Sagar
1955

FOREWORDS

by V. C. SHUKLA

AMONGST the living, the best-known tiger hunter of the world is Khan Saheb Jamshed Butt. Although he has personally shot over 150 tigers, his most unique experience comes not from this, but from a lifetime spent in the jungles.

I met Khan Saheb just after I left university. To him I owe the love I have for the wild and its inhabitants—in his company I learned to understand the wild animals and their habits.

Most experienced inter-continental hunters have found Khan Saheb the most experienced and versatile hunter they have ever met. He rises at 4 a.m., is a complete teetotaler and of incorruptible character. This book records outstanding events of his hunting career, as an amateur hunter until 1951 and as a professional since then.

It has been my privilege to be associated with him professionally—he is a wonderful man and an unforgettable character.

V. C. SHUKLA

*Managing Director, Allwyn Cooper Ltd.
Nagpur*

Preface

I WAS born in the year 1903 in Gujrat in the Punjab Province of India (now Pakistan). I had five brothers and four sisters. My father, who was a forest contractor in Central Provinces, was a very pious man, and although a good shot, was not interested in shikar.

My elder brother, Amir Khisro, was a lawyer and his son, B. Z. Kaikaus is Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Next comes Amir Murtiza, who was a forest contractor and a famous hunter, and from him I received my first lessons in hunting. Then, Dr. Mohd Shuja Namus, who became a Classical scholar and was Principal of a college at Bahawalpur and is now Education Officer, Gilgit Agency. I am next, and following me is Dr. Sultan Sikander, who is in the Pakistan government service, and lastly—the youngest—Amir Hamza, also a forest contractor, a shikari, President of a business concern and Vice-President of the Municipal Committee, Itarsi district. The sons of my sisters nearly all carry commissions in the Indian, now Pakistan Army.

At the age of five years, I entered the Church of Scotland Mission School, Gujrat, and for the first few years settled down like any other boy.

Soon my restless nature began to show itself and I started playing truant, running off to the ponds and tanks which were scattered about the city, to catch fish with a rod; climbing tall trees to take young birds and eggs out of the nests, and shooting birds with catapults, bow and arrows.

When I was about eleven years of age, I began to think of higher adventures. I would go to the River Chanab, about seven miles from home to swim and fish and to hunt snakes

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in the dense forest which stood on the banks of the river. I thought nothing of walking at least sixteen miles a day. Inevitably, retribution caught up with me, and after warnings had had no effect, I was expelled from school. I was sent to the Government High School where the same thing happened, and to Zamindar High School—a repeat performance. Finally, I persuaded my parents to allow me to follow my instincts. In 1916, at the age of thirteen, I was sent to the Central Provinces to work with my elder brother Amir Murtiza, at Imli Pani, Bhopal State. My brother had been advised to give me the roughest work in order that I might tire of the life and wish to return to my studies. On the contrary, the jungles of Vindhya Chal and their kaleidoscope of wild life enchanted me so much that I have remained in this Province ever since. During the partition of India in 1947, millions of Muslims migrated to Pakistan but I became an Indian national.

I very quickly learned to use a gun and I began to shoot deer and smaller animals. At the age of sixteen I shot my first tiger—from the ground with a 12-bore gun.

I had been sitting at a water-hole on a moonlit night in summer, with a Gond shikari; we had hidden ourselves among branches and leaves, intending to shoot stags when they came to drink. I saw an animal coming towards me and I took aim, but the shikari caught my hand to prevent me shooting. "Don't fire, it is a tiger," he said, but in spite of the warning I fired. The next moment the Gond was up a tree imploring me to come up after him, but I knew my aim had been correct and the tiger had dropped with a shot in the shoulder. However, I remained with my gun ready and when there was no movement I threw stones at him to be sure he was dead.

I also shot my first man-eater panther in the same year.

When I was nineteen years old, my father died. I then started as a forest contractor on my own. With headquarters at a village called Padhar, I soon had branches in many of the surrounding districts of Betul in the Central Provinces. But hunting was in my blood and I was so frequently on shikar

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that my business suffered at the hands of my employees and I lost very heavily. I had to take casual labour until, in 1933, with a wife and two children to support, I decided to devote my attention to business rather than shikar. Within a few years I had opened several branches in forest contracting. With the outbreak of the war in 1939, I was appointed Honorary Assistant Recruiting Officer and had to move my headquarters from Padhar to Betul. I was elected to several war committees and in 1942 made President of the Forest Contractors Association. By 1943, I had branches of my business at Amla, Ghoradongri, Itarsi, Banapura, Bombay and Lahore, but misfortune befell me again soon after 1947 and I had to close them one after another.

I then became an agent and shikar organizer for the firm of Allwyn Cooper, Limited (Big Game Hunters), Wardha Road, Nagpur. Now I have started my own shikar concern, called "Tiger Trails" to outfit big game hunting and photographic expeditions by sportsmen from abroad.

General Hints for Shikaris

SHIKARI beware! Everything in the jungle which you mean to destroy acts as your enemy and is ready with revenge the moment you lose caution. A serpent hanging from a tree branch is ready to strike; a scorpion creeping under the crevice of a stone is just as ready to bite. A thorn, a small insect, a white ant will certainly disturb your peace of mind once it touches your body. The least carelessness may give ample opportunity for a bear sleeping in a bamboo grove or a panther sitting on the branch of a tree, or even a tiger dozing in the shade of a rock, to pounce upon you before you can bring your gun to position. Inanimate things can be just as dangerous—the sandbank in the river which belies the depths beyond; the tall grasses which conceal; the “strong” branch which crumbles when urgently gripped; the mud that will hold like a vice and the seemingly harmless pile of stones which may be some animal’s “den”.

You must always keep alert. Even if you propose shooting wild fowl you should be in readiness to face a tiger. Do not assume that the part of the jungle you are operating in abounds only in your particular quarry. When you shoot, shoot to kill—many a wounded animal has turned the hunter into the hunted.

It is of the utmost necessity that when a shikari goes out shooting, his kit bag should contain the following: Gun and cartridges which have been tested by himself (servants must not be trusted in this matter); water bottle; a small bedding roll; torch; light refreshments; a small bottle of carbolic acid mixed

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with sweet oil; cotton and dressing material for first aid; a bayonet; a knife with a blade about 5 inches long; a box of matches and some cash.

A real shikari would never try to shoot a female animal, young ones or the very weak, nor leave a wounded animal in its agony.

A sportsman must be prepared to face difficulties and inconveniences in good humour. Between themselves, shikaris should feel no distinction of race, caste or creed and each should be prepared to give his life for the other if circumstances dictated. High-ranking sportsmen will unhesitatingly mix with shikaris of the lowest status; indeed, this shikari of the lowest status has to give the commands to these dignitaries when directing their movements in the jungle.

Shikar is a game for brave people and many a timid hunter has become fearless after some time in the jungle. A sportsman should abide by all the rules and regulations governing the sport, and adopt a simple diet of the flesh of wild animals, such as deer and wildfowl, fresh vegetables, eggs and fruits.

Many health-giving fruits can be found in the forests, especially the buds of the Akao plant of which three to six buds should be consumed every day. When doing this, sit near the plant facing the wind so that the air passing through the plant can be inhaled. Fresh twigs from the Nim trees, about a half to one, should be swallowed with water after being thoroughly masticated. These increase resistance to illness and lengthen the life span. If the shikari overloads his belly with food, it not only affects his health but causes drowsiness and shortness of breath. A fast day once a week is very beneficial.

At evening, after returning from a day's hunting, a bath should be taken, preferably where swimming is possible. If the hunter is suffering exhaustion or overtiredness, he should take a hot bath followed by a brisk rub-down, a drink of hot milk mixed with a few pieces of ginger and black chillies and then lie down covered with a blanket. If there are no facilities

for bathing, the face, head, hands, legs and round the thighs must be washed because these limbs perspire freely and must be kept clean and free from dust. Miswak (a Babool or Nim twig) is better than any toothbrush. There should be a daily change of clothing. Normally, a shirt and a pair of shorts are suitable, but in a locality where mosquitoes are prevalent full length pants and full sleeve shirt are necessary. Khaki, green or ash colour are the best shades for clothing and a hat or pagri should always be worn, not only as a guard against the hot sun but because it may save your life. If a tiger or panther jumps on you and you have no time to load your weapon, throw the hat towards the animal and whilst it is devouring your head-gear you can load up. The minimum amount of clothing should be worn both in the hot sun and the biting cold and a sportsman should avoid taking tea, cigarettes, wines and betel leaves, and even more so, opium or other drugs. A shikari addicted to intoxicants can never become a good shot.

It is important to rise an hour before sunrise and to massage and exercise the body—go for a walk, climb trees and do breathing exercises. Six to eight hours' sleep each night is advisable but if compelled to keep awake during the night watching a kill, the lost sleep should be made up the next day.

While on shikar in the jungle, water should only be drunk in sips, and only after boiling unless from a fast-flowing fresh spring. Water should not be taken during meals but about an hour afterwards. And always wear comfortable shoes.

I am convinced all the birds and animals in the forests pray to God morning and evening. In the same manner should the shikari also pray to God and thank Him for creating him a man.

Every sportsman should carry a firearm according to his resources. A rich hunter will no doubt have very expensive guns and rifles, a man of more modest means a 12-bore gun,

and a poor fellow probably only a muzzle-loader, but the work of all these firearms would be the same. Courage and good aiming are more effective than the value of the gun.

A muzzle-loading gun is excellent. It will kill a tiger with one bullet. The first principle in the care of this gun is to wash it with hot water once a week, using a pull-through, and then dry with cotton and oil the barrel well. Clean again with dry cotton before loading. Ordinary gunpowder or smokeless gunpowder can be used but never nitro powder which may cause the barrel to burst, as also would a too strong padding of cotton. The best padding is cow dung, or pieces of paper or woollen padding—these cannot catch fire. A muzzle-loading gun, well cared for and loaded carefully, is as good as a 12-bore gun, and if properly aimed is sure to kill an animal at a distance of 50 to 75 yards, and frequently at 100 yards. A muzzle-loading gun that is very old or rusty, however, is dangerous and liable to burst.

The 12-bore gun, although some regard it as only fit to shoot birds, achieves just as good results in the hands of an experienced shikari, but the range is limited to 50 to 75 yards. Care must be taken to see that the barrel is always clean and there are no obstructions. Both the pins and hammers should be in order and the cartridges should not be too old nor affected by damp. A hunter should not use the weapons of another hunter without trying them first and every fresh stock of cartridges should be tested.

Most rifles for hunting purposes range between the .22 and the .577. Although there is a rifle of .600 bore it is generally impossible to use it.

A .22 is useful for shooting birds as well as deer. At a standing range of 15 to 25 yards, a good shot will also kill panthers and heavy stags. I, myself, have shot panthers, blue bulls and pigs with this rifle but I never had an opportunity to use it on a tiger. A .22 high-power rifle is very effective on plains deer which never allow the shikari to come near, always keeping beyond the range of an ordinary .22. It is also

a good weapon to shoot fish! The bullet passes at high speed and air currents cannot change its direction.

Next come the 32-40; .300 and .310 Sherwood; ordinary rifles, useful for deer. Then there are the 7 mm., .275 and .300 Springfield, 8 mm. and .355. These are all very good for blue bulls, stags and panthers and may be used on tiger if one is an expert at striking a vital spot, otherwise they may fatally wound, the tiger only expiring after three or four days.

I commenced with an M.L. gun followed by a 12-bore and then a .315 rifle, and with these I shot and killed thirty-three tigers, usually from the ground. I could always hit the vital part, not only during daylight but in the hours of darkness when I took aim between the two shining eyes of the tiger.

The .375 and .405 rifles are slightly superior to the foregoing. For tiger, a rifle between .400 to .577 and a .375 Magnum or a .423 (10.75 mm.) are very effective. A sportsman would use a rifle according to his own strength. I generally use a .577 now to shoot a tiger but it has a powerful kick and I would not recommend it to anyone not physically strong.

A true sportsman should at all times have thought for his own safety and that of his companions. This is not cowardice but prudence. With calm courage and a bold face you can command even a wounded tiger or panther, and by looking straight into its eyes I can assure you that it will not dare to charge you. It will certainly do so if it takes you unawares. It has happened that a tiger or panther, after being wounded, has charged me and then seeing me face to face, has stopped dead at three to four paces. It roars, threatens, but ultimately runs away. If your courage falters and it does charge you, you have a greater chance of escaping with minor injuries if you are facing it, rather than when you are trying to run away. It would hardly allow you to go five or six paces! Again, if you face it and are wounded you will be hailed as a courageous man but if wounded while running away you remain branded as a coward. Before taking up the sport of shikar, you should

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search your heart. If you are sure that your hands, your aim, your brain and heart will not fail you, then by all means pursue the most dangerous game in the world and come out victorious, but if you are not sure of your own self, do not risk your own life and that of your companions.

Chapter Two

Some Wild Animals of the Central Provinces

Tiger

IT is a general belief that a tiger is a brave animal and perhaps the most powerful, but in my forty-five years of experience I have found it to be shy and gentle and generally avoids meeting human beings. It is only when it is wounded that it becomes fierce and, once turned a man-eater, remains so, wandering about in search of human blood, refusing to eat anything else. The female when in company with her cub will attack when approached.

A female is usually delivered of her cubs in a thin part of the forest in the vicinity of a village. She has up to six at a time. At the age of six months a cub has grown to the size of a dog and at one year is as big as a panther. It is full grown at the age of two years. A female can give birth to cubs at the age of three years.

A tiger is very strong. Some idea of this strength can be gathered from the fact that after killing a bison, it can drag it long distances; a feat which would require the concerted action of about thirty men to perform. A tiger's span of life is twenty-five to thirty years. An adult weighs up to 800 lb. and from head to tail its maximum length is 10 feet 6 inches, being $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet high. When hungry it can devour up to 150 lb. of flesh and it generally finishes its kill within two or three days. It starts on its kill from the hind legs, near the tail. In old age the tiger becomes very weak and the skin of its belly hangs down like empty sacks.

A tiger is hunted in the following two manners—during the day by arranging a beat and during the night by sitting in a machan, although this latter method can be used during the day. A machan (or platform) is fixed in a tree about ten to sixteen feet up, and for daytime, among wide-spreading branches so that there can be free movement on all sides. For use during the night a big tree with a dense growth of foliage should be chosen. Personally, I am against the machan system during the daytime. I like to shoot standing on the ground, and, anyway, it looks ridiculous for the shikari to sit safe and secure on a machan whilst the unarmed beaters remain on the ground. On the ground you will never display carelessness and you can take better aim. If the tiger is wounded and starts running away you can more quickly take up position for another shot. Only one man, or at the most two, should sit on a machan.

The following should be kept handy on a machan: Bedding roll, water bottle, match box, an empty bottle for urine, torch and a big knife. The sportsman should be on the machan half an hour or an hour before sunset. There should be no talking, coughing or moving and smoking is strictly forbidden. The approach of a tiger is well heralded by warnings from wildfowl, peacocks and deer; the tiger himself does not make any noise when moving, beyond a cracking twig or the slightest motion of swishing air as he passes. When he comes to the kill he should be allowed to commence eating and when thoroughly occupied he can be shot in the shoulder or neck. Even if he drops at the first shot a second should be fired for good measure. If wounded, do not give chase during the night. If he runs off in the direction of your homeward journey you must stay in the machan all night. The search for the wounded tiger should be made in the morning with the aid of buffaloes. The buffaloes go ahead and the party follow. If a man gets mauled the wounds should be treated with carbolic acid on cotton which is pressed into the wound. If you come upon a tiger unarmed, do not try to run away. Stand and face it,

SOME WILD ANIMALS OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES

making as much noise as possible. It may run away and if it does not you should throw your hat, coat or pagri at it. Whilst the tiger is engaged with this offering you can climb a tree or slip out of sight. Alternatively, if you have sufficient courage, it is only necessary to lie on the ground holding your breath and it will not attack you.

Panther

A panther is a mischievous creature. It is brave but brainless and extremely dangerous when injured. There are three types of panther. The largest is known as *Gul-Baug*, is about $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet high and weighs up to 400 lb. It is fearless and generally comes to the plains and riverside in the vicinity of a village but does not enter one. It kills bullocks and cows in the same manner as a tiger kills but starts eating by piercing the belly and not from the hind legs like the tiger.

The smaller or "ordinary" panther is about $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet long and 2 feet 3 inches high and weighs about 200 lb. It will come boldly into a village and carry off dogs, goats and the calves of cows and buffaloes. Sometimes it will also kill a grown cow or buffalo.

The smallest panther is the "poultry lifter"—about 5 feet long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ feet high, weighing about 100 lb. It enters even houses and in addition to poultry will take small goats and dogs and sometimes calves of cows. It is a fearless thief, prowling about the villages almost every night. It has the finest skin of the three species, but it is no use trying to arrange a beat for a panther—it can hide anywhere and even runs through the beaters. It is best to shoot from a machan at night. If you miss and keep quiet it will come back to the kill. But remember it can climb up your tree like a cat and sometimes takes the kill up too. The female gives birth to two young at a time, usually inside a hollow tree or underneath the rocks.

Bear

Bear is a silly animal and is a vegetarian, but all the same it kills man just for the fun of it. In the Central Provinces

(Madhya Pradesh) two kinds are found. A black bear 6 feet long and 3 feet high (on all-fours), weighing up to 400 lb., lives among rocks and in out of the way places not easily approached. It lives on white ants, honey, roots and fruits, and can climb trees very skilfully. The female gives birth to two young ones.

It will attack a person who is alone. When it comes near it stands on its hind legs but if a man faces it with a bold challenge, it runs away. During the day it sits about sucking its paws and making a howling noise which can be heard at a distance of 100 yards. It should be shot in the chest when it is standing up.

The other type is known as the Bhui bear. It is about 2 to 2½ feet tall and 1 foot 3 inches high and weighs up to 60 lb. It is also black in colour but the underparts are grey. It lives under the ground after digging its hole or in stone caves. Although very strong it does not attack unless injured.

Wild Dog

This animal is an oddity. It preys on every animal—tiger, panther, sambhar and any and every animal which comes its way it overpowers in a short time, but it is afraid of man and even when wounded runs away leaving its prey or kill.

It is deep red in colour but its mouth, tips of ears and some portions of the tail are black. It has a bushy tail and long hairs on the ears. It is of the height of an ordinary dog but rather longer—about 3½ feet in length from nose to tip of tail and 15 to 21 inches in height and weighs about 50 lb. Its teeth and claws are very sharp. It is found in packs of anything from four to thirty. The female gives birth to up to six pups at a time after five months of pregnancy and the young ones are full grown within a year. Once a pack of wild dogs roams the jungles all the other animals leave that particular part of it. Even the tiger, the mighty king of the jungle, is afraid of them and runs away immediately he spots them; to no avail, for these speedy runners quickly surround him. A tiger does not normally climb trees but a pack of wild dogs often compel

him to do so; then the dogs will sit down, surrounding the tree and stay there for hours, sometimes days, going for meals and water turn about. Finally, hunger and thirst will drive the tiger down. The dogs attack the victim's eyes first, keeping clear of its claws and mouth, which, in the case of a tiger, could tear them to pieces. The dogs bark shrilly to alert their companions in the forest but cease when the victim commences to cry out. All the animals in the district become nervous when they hear an attack of wild dogs and cry out in unison until the forest is resounding with calls and cries.

Wild dogs will eat a victim's kill as well as the victim himself, and when they have bad luck in the jungle will not hesitate to take bullocks, cows and goats from the villages. They do not all walk together in the jungle but move about scattered and do not fight with each other; neither do the strong males drive away the weak ones. A tiger or a panther may become a pet, but a wild dog never! As a puppy it is tolerable but has always to be shot when grown. They roam considerable distances over hills, plains and thick forest, but by taking cover near its kill, a shikari may shoot it with a .22. There is no need for a big bore and if S.G. or S.S.G. is used, two or three dogs may fall with one shot.

If you know of their presence in any part of the jungle, and it is a hot day, sit alone at a likely watering-hole. Send your companions or beaters to all the nearby watering-holes, instructing them to prevent the dogs drinking. In this way they will have to come to you, and if you are well hidden accurate aim is all that is necessary.

One dog can eat seven to eight pounds of flesh at a time and is not at all particular about its condition or smell. On a fresh kill they normally break through the belly first but when there are many of them they start eating from any place they can get a hold of.

The pug marks resemble those of a household dog but the imprint of the nails can be seen.

Hyena

This animal is indigenous to almost the whole of India and might be called a permanent conservancy officer. He has the greatest power of smell of any animal in the country. If the wind is right, he can scent a dead animal from about a mile away and if it is buried three to four feet deep he can find it and dig it up. With his fine teeth he can pierce the strongest hide.

The coat of the hyena is similar to a tiger's—indeed, inexperienced hunters sometimes mistake it for a tiger—but the mouth is black and it more nearly resembles a wolf. The ears are very long and remain in a standing position. There is a lining of tough hair over its back like a pig; the tail is small with a thick growth of hair towards the end, similar to a jackal's. Its hind parts slope downwards and although its chest and stomach are heavily built it has the slim height of a wolf. The pug marks are like a dog's but bigger in girth, the toes being longer and the nail impressions visible.

Its retreat is usually among big rocks or in the "rendezvous" of the porcupines. This animal very rarely kills its own prey but lies in waiting for weak animals to die. It may kill a small or very sickly animal, or when one is immobilized, as for instance a goat tied up as bait for a tiger or panther.

When two or more hyenas are taking a common meal they make a fearful noise over it, which, in the night-time sounds very spine-chilling. They will approach the kill of tigers or panthers only when the killer is not in the vicinity, and even then they eat very nervously, running away as soon as they scent the larger animal. When hyenas run away and do not come back, the shikari knows that the tiger or panther is approaching.

Most wild animals eat the flesh only of a kill—the hyena eats everything including the last bone. It will hover round a dead animal for months to get the final fraction, and when it is too swollen with food to run, a shikari can easily follow it and beat it to death. It does not attack man even after being wounded.

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Water Buffalo

This is a more dangerous animal than a tiger. In size and stature it is nothing less than a small elephant and equal to a bison. It weighs round about $1\frac{1}{2}$ tons; its legs are as thick as those of a rhinoceros. It has a very thick black coat of about 1 to $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches deep, with coarser hairs distributed throughout. To distinguish between a male and a female, the male has a thick neck and thick horns which are quite straight; the female has a thin neck and thin horns which are circular towards the tips. The record length of horns in Central Provinces is 128 inches. The pug marks resemble those of an elephant, being, in a full-grown bull, 9 to 10 inches. Even on hard ground the marks can be seen and it is a simple matter to follow his trail. But take care! This animal is very keen-sighted and can spot you from a long distance. It can smell you as well and will charge without provocation. A tiger is a gentleman compared to him. It takes more than one shot to ground him and even when nearing his end he can do considerable harm to you. After getting wounded, if he sees the hunter sitting in a tree, he will try to root out the tree and take his revenge, failing which he will sit under the tree waiting. Waiting until he succumbs or you decide to descend.

Sometimes a whole herd will make an assault on you as you drive in your bullock cart or jeep. If you do not hit a buffalo in a vital spot, no amount of shots will make any difference. To kill it you must use a solid bullet followed by a soft bullet, and it must be hit in the neck.

The buffalo usually lives in the plains where the long grasses grow and comes into the cultivated fields to feed at night. The best way to track it is to follow, early in the morning, the path it has taken into the forest. Do not follow it into the thickest forest but go round to see whether it has come out or is still inside. Try to decide which way it will go if it is beaten out, then fix up a strong machan which is not likely to fall if he tries to uproot the tree. Then arrange to beat him out, but remember that if the wind is blowing towards him from you,

he is not likely to come your way. It is always risky to try to drive a buffalo towards a river or open ground—it is likely to turn and charge the beaters or dive into the thickest forest. If it should decide to come your way, shoot it in the shoulder joint or neck. If it is facing straight towards you, then shoot between the eyes, or, if it is sideways, behind the ear. It is one of the few animals that, on the slightest smell, or the hearing of voices, will turn back towards that which took its attention.

During the summer the buffalo loves to get into the mud and wallow, and in the rains, when mosquitoes trouble it, it gets right into the water, keeping only its head above for breathing. When there is a scarcity of water, it appears near the water-holes as soon as it becomes dark and grazes on the green grass round about, returning to its hide at daybreak. It will continue going to the same spot until disturbed, so if you can unobtrusively erect a machan, you have a good chance to bag one.

The best shooting position is from an elephant's back, but, unfortunately, the buffalo is not afraid of an elephant and if wounded is quite likely to charge the elephant, with disastrous results.

Bison

A bison, on the other hand, is a simple animal. It measures 6 feet in height and about 9 feet 6 inches from nose to tail and its horns are as long as 46 inches. The male's are thick and round, the female's slim and pointing upwards. It weighs upwards of 1,500 lb. The male is grey in colour with a tinge of gold, the tail end is always black and the legs white. During its prime it is very handsome, but when it grows old the hair vanishes and only the black coat remains. It feeds on grass, wild fruits and the leaves of bamboo trees and lives on the tops of hills, coming down to the plains for water and food. An old bison leaves the herd and will be found alone. Sometimes, out of pure mischief, young colts are driven out of the herd. The female gives birth to only one young at a time.

When driving your bullock cart or jeep through the jungle,

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a bison may come quite close to you, look at you intently and snort. If a herd comes, they will surround you. Do not be afraid, they will not attack if you keep cool and do not move. Shout at them and they will run away. More often they avoid man but they will attack if wounded. Their smell is very keen and they quickly become alert, and start blowing and snorting violently.

The best way to approach a bison is in a bullock cart or with a domesticated she-buffalo. The bison will not run away on seeing the buffalo and if he does not get your wind, you can get quite close. But take cover behind a large tree before you shoot. If it is not killed with the first shot you must remember that a bison generally runs the way it is facing. Aim for the shoulder or the side of the neck and do not use a gun with a small bore.

A tiger dare not attack a herd of bisons, but if it comes across one alone, it will kill, after first breaking the bison's hind leg. But not before quite a battle has ensued to which the trampled grasses and torn bushes bear witness.

A bison is so fond of salt that it is not a joke to say you should throw salt in its path and it will fall an easy prey to the shikar.

Blue Bull

After buffalo and bison, the blue bull is the next largest wild animal of India. It is about 5 feet 3 inches in height and 9 feet in length from nose to tail, weighing 800 to 900 pounds. The male is blue-coloured and has small horns of about 7 inches long, which it does not shed like the antelope family, of which the blue bull is a member. A very old bull has a more blackish appearance. It has a beard of about 6 inches long and its face has the appearance of that of a horse. In fact, a female could quite easily be mistaken for a mare. The female is a deep yellow colour with a tint of red and has no horns.

The blue bull is a most intelligent, cunning and sharp-sighted animal. Generally, the bulls live in herds; a single bull

on the roam is one that has been forced to leave the herd after losing a fight with a kingpin. Herds of as many as twenty-five bulls can be seen without a single female. The female gives birth not infrequently to twins and has an eleven-month pregnancy.

Like tiger, panther, bison and water buffalo, this animal does not take the initiative in attacking man, but it will do so if wounded. Then the blue bull, especially the female, is a terrible animal. It rushes upon a man and not only grips him in its teeth, from which there is no escape, but wields its horns and kicks savagely with its hoofs.

Its habitat is the plains where small bushes grow and in open forests. It dislikes both long grass and dense jungle. Its food is grass, leaves of trees, mahua flowers and aonla, and will come into the fields at sunset, not leaving until sunrise. Like the deer and black buck, it will approach habitations and the open plains during the evening and early morning seeking water to drink, but will run away at the merest suspicion of the presence of a human being. Yet, strangely enough, in its own territory, it will stand and watch a bullock cart passing by or a man walking steadily on foot, and only run swiftly away when the motion stops. If, therefore, you wish to bag one, you must have your gun adjusted to fire the moment the cart stops or you cease walking. When he is grazing, you could approach him stealthily from behind, taking cover from bush to bush, but great caution is required in this type of stalking.

A neck shot is the only one that is certain to kill. It is a very strong animal and a shoulder shot not properly placed may only cause it to run off—even two or three bullets badly aimed will not make it fall. They rarely come within the range of a 12-bore, a .400 or a .375 magnum being the only effective weapons. The law allows the shooting of both male and female.

When the blue bull is engaged in a fight he creates a fearful upheaval, frothing at the mouth and breathing heavily. The shikari can then approach quite close, it being so engrossed in

its rage. It is the only animal that will face up to wild dogs, and, although any dogs coming within reach of its powerful jaws will be crushed, the dogs always win in the end by their very persistence. The only way the blue bull can save its life is to jump into deep water. The dogs cannot fight and swim at the same time, nevertheless, they mount guard on the bank waiting for it to come out, sometimes holding siege for two or three days on end.

Stag (Sambhar)

These animals are found in every part of the Central Provinces and are of two kinds. The larger is called Tallia Dhank and the smaller, Batani.

Tallia Dhanks are up to 7 feet in length and 5 feet high, weighing up to 750 lb. The antlers, the record length of which is 52 inches, have six branches, with smaller shoots growing from these six when it becomes old. The girth of the antlers is very thick and the animal sheds them every year during March to April. The new ones appear in May to June and at first are very tender, becoming hard within two or three months. During this time it shuns the company of the hinds.

When young the colour of the Tallia Dhank is yellowish-brown, turning gradually to black as it gets older. The hairs on the neck are very long. It possesses excellent powers of hearing and scent. The female gives birth to one young, which is yellow in colour like a barking deer.

Its favourite habitat is long grass and dense bush and mountainsides; in the summer it prefers the green grass on the banks of streams. It feeds on grass, the flowers of the mahua tree and on oil-yielding fruits of certain trees. When grazing at night, it will stand stock-still when the wind blows because it cannot hear or smell in moving air and apparently does not have the ability to see well in the dark.

Batani resembles the Tallia Dhank but weighs only up to 500 lb. and is about the height of a cheetal (spotted deer), the antlers reaching 32 inches long at the most.

During a beat, the sambhar behaves very foolishly. It will run towards the beater, sometimes jumping right over him and it is not unusual for it to about-turn and knock the beaters over. I have known cases where the beaters have been wounded and killed. On the other hand, it does not charge when wounded. When a bullock cart is being used, the sambhar will stand and gaze curiously at the cart, and will run away only if you get down or make a noise, but only for a few yards, when it will stop again to listen and smell. But it can run in spite of its bulk, climbing a hill faster than any man can attempt.

There is another, smaller, species of sambhar called the Barasinga, but because of the ease with which it can be shot, it is becoming very rare. It is similar in most details to the sambhar but has twelve branches to its antlers. They are generally found in the Balaghat and Mandla districts of the Central Provinces, in herds of two to fifteen, in the plains and jungle; they do not frequent the mountainsides.

All sambhar, whatever their species, come to the streams or water-holes in the evening and can be found there from about 8 p.m. to 5 or 6 a.m.

Cheetal (Spotted Deer)

It is the most beautiful, simple and silly animal amongst the jungle folk. Its colour is reddish-yellow with white spots, the males gradually turning reddish-black with the years. Like the sambhar it possesses six antlers with two to four extra points when it becomes old. The record length of the antlers is up to 41 inches. It sheds its antlers in the months of August to September every year and new ones grow by December. It also shuns the hinds when the new antlers are tender. The hinds do not possess antlers; they frequently give birth to twins, after a pregnancy of six months, and a fawn is fully grown within a year. They live in herds with as many as four to six stags amongst them.

The cheetal does not like plains, mountains or long grass,

but prefers to live in the dense, thorny bushes alongside the cultivated fields. It eats the leaves of trees, mahua and aonla, but is so fond of the village crops that it roams around the fields like a pet and does not appear to fear man himself, only running away when frightened. Unlike the sambhar, it does not wait until night-time to drink, but will be out of the forest grazing and drinking before sunset. It usually cries with a sweet voice at night for no reason at all and when the male is in heat its cry sounds like that of a donkey.

Amongst all the wild animals, the cheetal excels at the game of hide-and-seek. It will hide behind a bush, merging with the landscape so that it is impossible to see it and however much noise is made it remains there. When disturbed by beaters out of its hide, it will run wildly in any direction, never going straight, jumping this way and that, until the beaters stand helplessly by.

Its flesh is the tastiest of all the wild animals' except, perhaps, that of the barking deer or the four-horn deer. The best way to shoot it is by way of a bullock cart. It is so foolish that it will stand and watch with interest its dying companion and not even look at the shikari. Another way is to take one or two bullocks, and drive them towards it using them as a shield for yourself; this way you can approach very close. When wounded it does not charge, neither does it jump over or turn back on the beaters. If only it would run straight it could easily out-distance even wild dogs, but because of its crazy behaviour it falls an easy prey to them. It does sometimes have the intelligence to run towards the villages when chased by wild dogs—they always fall back when it reaches this sanctuary.

Antelopes

There are five types of antelope in the Central Provinces. First, there is the black buck. The male has a black back and the female is reddish-yellow, both have white undersides. The male only has horns—two curly ones and the record length is 26 inches. It weighs about 80 lb., runs very fast and has very

acute eyesight. It lives in the plains and fields. The female gives birth to one fawn.

Second, the chink deer, also likes the plains but will go into the bushy forests nearby. Both male and female are reddish-yellow with white undersides and have a small black tail which is almost permanently in motion. The male has two black, curly horns about 11 inches long and the female has two thin, straight ones of about 5 inches in length. It weighs about 50 lb., is a cleverer and faster animal and has even better eyesight than the black buck. They graze and drink water in the daytime. Here again, the best way to shoot both types is from a bullock cart. They will allow it to approach as close as fifty yards, unless they have previously been alarmed by gunfire, when they will run at the first sight of you. One needs three or four bullock carts to deal with this situation. The shikari must hide himself somewhere in their expected line of escape whilst the cart drivers round up the deer and dispatch them in his direction. It is possible to stalk them on foot when they are sitting or grazing but it requires a considerable amount of skill and caution.

The third type is the four-horn deer. Two of the horns are between the ears and the other two a little above the eyes. Both male and female are reddish-grey with whitish-yellow belly, although the male is slightly darker in colour. It weighs up to 45 lb. It has long, thick hairs on its body which deprive it of the beauty of the black buck and chink deer. It also lives in the jungle on the fringe of the villages and goes into the fields to graze at night, although it drinks between eight in the morning and two or three o'clock in the afternoon. The female does not possess horns when young but when it becomes old, two little horns grow on the back of the head. She gives birth to two fawns.

Number four is the Kotra or barking deer which lives in the big forests and in the mountains, never going into the plains and very seldom into the fields. Its colour resembles that of the four-horn deer and its food of grass, mahua and aonla is also

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the same. The male has two horns, slightly turned at the top, with another shoot coming from each horn. The lower part of the horn is covered with hair about 2 inches long and the record length of the horns is 5 inches. It weighs nearly 60 lb. Two big teeth protrude from its mouth like those of a pig. The female gives birth to two fawns. The barking deer, like the four-horn deer, cries out loudly at the sight of a tiger, but at times, as its name would imply, it barks like a dog. It can be found drinking water at both morning and evening.

Once again, for shooting purposes, the bullock cart comes into its own. It can approach to within 50 yards, but it is unlikely to come upon a herd. These deer generally run in pairs only. If you shoot one, the other will remain standing looking on—even if you are on foot, the partner will not run away and you have another chance. A .22 high-power rifle or .250-300 or .315 is best for this purpose. But if the deer comes your way in a beat, then a 12-bore with a load of S.G. or S.S.G. is the best as it will be running very fast.

The fifth one in this group is the mouse deer. It is coloured like a rabbit and looks like one, but has two small horns on its head. Although it steps out like a deer it sits like a rabbit. It only weighs up to 5 lb. It is generally found in the districts of Balaghat and Buster Mandle. It hides in grass and when approached runs off like a ball rolling away. It is only distinguished by the white spots on its body like those of the cheetal. The fawns are born two at a time, and it feeds on grass and mahua. Numbers 1 to 4, 12-bore cartridges should be used to shoot it—rifle shot would completely destroy it.

Pig

You can find it in nearly every part of India. There are two types, one is grey and the other white but both have similar size and habits. It is an extremely strong animal—as strong as a bison or blue bull and weighs from 350 to 400 lb. It feeds on wild bulbs of all kinds, mahua, mango seeds and all kinds of crops.

It is a very difficult animal to kill. It can run away after several shots from a high-powered rifle if the vital parts have not been hit. Many big specimens killed in the Central Provinces carry healed wounds from previous unsuccessful attempts. Like a tiger, its wounds heal very quickly and when it is fat in the winter season a big-bore rifle is required to shoot it. The fatal shot is supposed to be in the neck but a shoulder shot is effective although it may not drop it on the spot. Young ones and females may be shot with a small-bore rifle and L.G. and S.G. provided they are within range. If merely wounded, it runs straight in the direction it is facing, and in its anger does not see trees or big stones and will charge right through them. If the shikari has shot it face on and merely wounded it, he has a very poor chance, for it will charge full force and throw him to the ground tearing him with its tusks. If he should survive this, it is cheering to know that it will not attack again, like a bison does, but will run away. Once when a shikari shot a pig from a bullock cart, it charged the cart and overturned it, but fortunately then ran away. The female also, especially when in company with its young, attacks when wounded. Although its tusks are small, it bites like a dog. A tiger can fell most other animals in the jungle with a single blow, but it has to work very hard to finish off a wild boar and is sometimes badly injured in the process, and forced to become a man-eater. At times the fight can go on for a whole night—the pig protects its hindquarters against the shelter of a bamboo grove, hollow tree or a big stone and sits down like a dog, attacking the tiger like lightning with its tusks. Only when completely infuriated or mad with the pain of wounds will the tiger attack with its full vigour and disregard and finally tear the pig to pieces.

There are ways to hunt pigs other than shooting:

- (1) Netting: A net. 20 to 25 feet by 7 to 8 feet is made with $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch diameter rope, the mouth of which can be closed and opened with the help of long ropes. It is placed in the path of pigs and they are driven from behind, branches of

trees being fixed on both sides of the path to serve as stop lines and two persons seated on each side at a distance of about 50 yards from the net. When the pigs pass these persons and are a little distance ahead, these shikaris make a lot of noise and the pigs rush off fast, right into the trap. Then the hunters kill them with spears. Sometimes tigers and panthers are caught this way.

- (2) When villagers have observed that pigs go daily on a certain track to the fields, they dig a pit, about 10 feet by 8 feet and 7 to 8 feet deep, and hide themselves at sunset along the sides of the route. When the pigs are at a distance of about 25 yards from the pit, the villagers begin to shout. The pigs rush headlong into the pit. Sometimes whole herds are caught in this way. Occasionally the pit is concealed with rotten branches and leaves and the pig is caught without any stimulus.
- (3) Another, rather cruel, way, is practised by the villagers. They put eight to ten small pebbles into one tola (slightly less than half an ounce) of potash and roll it up in paper and then in pieces of cloth which are fixed with gum. When dry, a coat of wheat and pea flour is given to it, being now about the size of a lemon. It is placed in the track of the pigs. When the pig tries to eat it, it immediately bursts and blows away its mouth.
- (4) They can be hunted from horseback, but this is very dangerous and requires courage on the part of the horseman. Frequently, pigs invade fields of jute and barley in the daytime, then the hunters go to the side of the field where there are open plains. Mounted on horseback and with a supply of spears they await whilst the pigs are being beaten out of the field and then give chase as they dash to freedom. It often requires several spears to be thrust into the pig's body to ensure death or they will run away with the spear buried deep in them. There is always the danger of a wounded one attacking the horses. This, of course, is the same method as the "sport" of pig-sticking.

They can also be hunted with dogs, but the dogs require the help of the hunter with spears to finish them off.

Snakes

In the Central Provinces there are four types of poisonous snakes—cobra, king-cobra, viper and krait, but there are many others which are harmless and which the aborigines eat.

A snake attacks under compulsion when it scents danger and will not come at you from a distance.

Small snakes can live from six to nine months without food and big snakes from nine months to one year. Python can live without food from one to one and a half years.

In cases of snakebite, the bitten portion of the flesh should be cut immediately with the blade of a knife or a razor and the wound made to bleed profusely. Powdered potassium permanganate should then be applied and the patient given a purgative followed by milk mixed with ghee in the proportion of three to one and with black chilli powder. If the patient is quite senseless, powdered salt, alum and black chillies in equal proportions, should be put in his eyes to revive him. Very soon the patient should respond with violent vomiting and purging.

Pests

Centipedes and scorpions can inflict poisonous and painful bites but they do not usually cause death. Black ants and red ants attack at the first opportunity and their onslaught is furious—the only thing to do is to flee. All types of bees give bad stings and mosquitoes are thirsty for human blood the moment the shikari enters the forest. A lot of mosquito bites can cause delayed but severe illness. Citronella oil or other mosquito repellents should be rubbed on the exposed parts of the body as a preventative, or at least as a deterrent to their activities.

Chapter Three

Arranging the Shoot

THE first and most important preliminary to bagging a tiger is the kill, or bait. There are two kinds of kill—the natural, which the tiger hunts out for himself and the previously prepared one of the shikari. In the first instance, the combination of luck and skill required depends upon so many factors that it may be regarded as a private affair between the shikari and the tiger, and I will proceed to discuss the arrangements usually made when organizing shoots for sportsmen and presenting the tiger with, as you may say, the kill on a silver plate.

The first thing to consider is the territory. The kill should not be tied up in forests which have many watering-holes or streams. A tiger will always carry the kill to a place where there is water and if there are too many such places you will not know where it is going and will be unable to make preparations. The best place is a piece of thick forest near an isolated watering-hole or a deep nala (ravine with a stream). The tiger will keep the kill there and stay nearby until it is eaten.

The time of year is important too. During the rains the tiger is to be found in forests near villages and in the open plains. Other animals are busy grazing the green grass and it is easier for him to get his prey. At this time of year it generally eats its kill at or near the scene of action because it does not require to seek out water.

A tiger will carry its kill a distance of as much as a mile if it does not find proper conditions in the vicinity, but if the rope

is so strong that it cannot break it, it will eat the kill on the spot.

After the kill has been tied, the persons who go next day to find out if it has been successful should not get there before sunrise. If the kill has been placed in thick forest, at least an hour should be allowed after sunrise before approaching. No disturbance should be made and observations should be carried out from a distant tree or other viewpoint. If the kill has been made and the tiger is not on it, they should go very quietly to the spot and cover it with twigs and leaves and return to the shikari. If the prey has been carried away they must on no account track after it.

At about 9 a.m. to midday, according to the season, the shikari will now go himself to the place to find out whether it is the kill of tiger, panther, wild dog or hyena, and if of the tiger or panther, whether a male or a female, a pair or a solitary animal. The kill will give all this information.

If it is the kill of a tiger, you will find two big teeth-holes on each side of its neck through which you could pass your finger. The head will be loose on the neck due to the dislocation of one or two cervical vertebrae from the skull, but this does not happen if the killer is a small female or a very young tiger. A tiger usually begins to eat its kill at the buttocks, but if there are cubs with a female they will put their teeth in any place where there is flesh and you will find a number of small holes. The pug marks will reveal whether it is a male or female tiger. The pad of a male is round and the toes are small, whereas the pad of a tigress is slightly oblong and the toes are long. The impressions of the cubs are faint, and, naturally, smaller but with big toes in proportion to the size of the pad.

A leopard also catches its prey by the neck but the teeth impressions are fine and more numerous, which means that this animal lets go of its prey and catches it again a number of times. Animals with a thick neck it will catch from one side only. A leopard starts eating its prey from the belly and never at the tail end. Its pug marks also reveal its identity.

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The wild dog first of all blinds its victim and after ripping open the abdomen will eat from any place. There is usually a pack of them and they do not catch the prey by the neck but at any spot they can get hold of. In their pug marks can be seen the impression of their nails.

The kill of a hyena can be identified by the many small marks of teeth on the neck and sometimes also on the hind legs of the victim. It will start eating usually from the belly. Its fore paws are as big as those of a medium-sized panther and its hind ones are like those of a wild dog.

If it is a hyena that you want to bag, you need only take a little cover on the ground and it will come to the kill at dusk, but if you are after something bigger, tie up a larger kill, which the hyena cannot tackle.

Wild dogs will come to the kill during the daytime, but in summer, if water is far away, they will not come at all. During the rains they will always be round about the kill. If you shoot one, do not go away; they will return quickly, but do not show yourself on their track or they will hold off. They are so destructive to wild animals that a sportsman should never miss the opportunity of thinning them down. Use a 12-bore L.G. shot with which you may get two or three at a time, or a .22.

When you receive news of a successful kill visit the scene about 9 a.m. if in summer or 11 a.m. in winter. Follow the kill by the dragging marks on open ground but when they enter the dense forest, do not go in. The tiger may be lying up near the kill and you may scare it away. You should go back to camp and arrange a beat. During this search you should have been extremely quiet and always on watch for the tiger—you may come across it any minute and must be ready to defend yourself and your companions. If you do come across it, and it presents a good target, take cover of a tree and supporting your gun on a branch take aim and shoot. The first aim is the best one and you should never try to take aim again and again for you will be sure to miss. If your hands tremble and your heart takes rapid beats, you are too nervous to shoot.

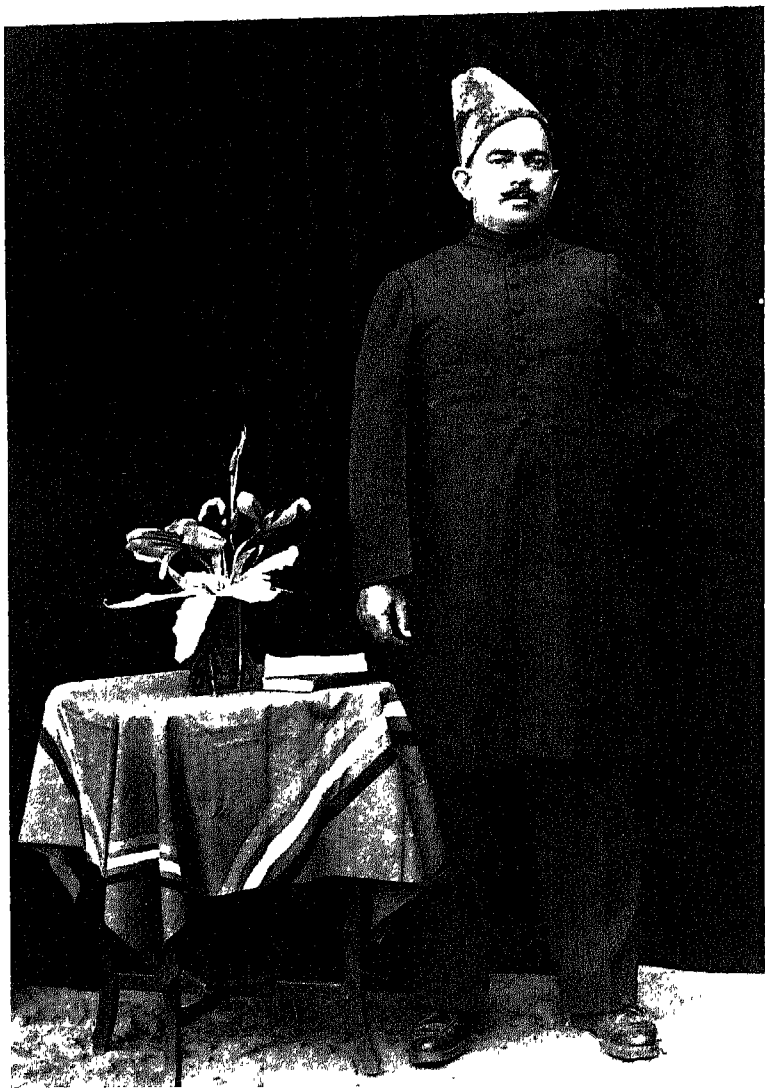
Before commencing the beat you will have found out the status of the killer. The tiger generally drags its kill by catching hold of a part of it with its mouth and carrying it forward, but if the kill is heavy the tiger drags it, pacing backwards all the time. It sometimes happens that when a tiger is dragging a heavy load backwards it falls into a deep ravine and is killed under the weight of its prey; or he may be unable to get out and ultimately dies.

If the tiger marches straight on, you can perceive its paws quite clearly on soft or muddy ground but if it goes backwards, the marks of the paws are difficult to find. If there are two tigers, the pug marks of one will be clearly visible over the dragging signs as also those of any cubs. If you find the marks of a tigress and cubs and the indications are that the cubs are very young, no beat should be arranged. A tigress with young generally attacks the beaters and if it gets killed the young are unable to fend for themselves.

If it is a couple which has made the kill, both will come out in the beat. Shoot the male first—it generally moves in front. If the tigress comes your way first, look to see if the tiger is following and, if so, spare the female. If the tigress should come quite close and the male is not in sight, shoot the female in a vital spot, once only, and remain perfectly still if you want the companion to appear.

Once you have located the tiger in the jungle, in its den, you should reconnoitre all the likely avenues of escape before commencing the beat. Should you come upon its kill, you must find out whether or not the tiger has left the jungle—it is likely to be found in thick growth beside some quiet water.

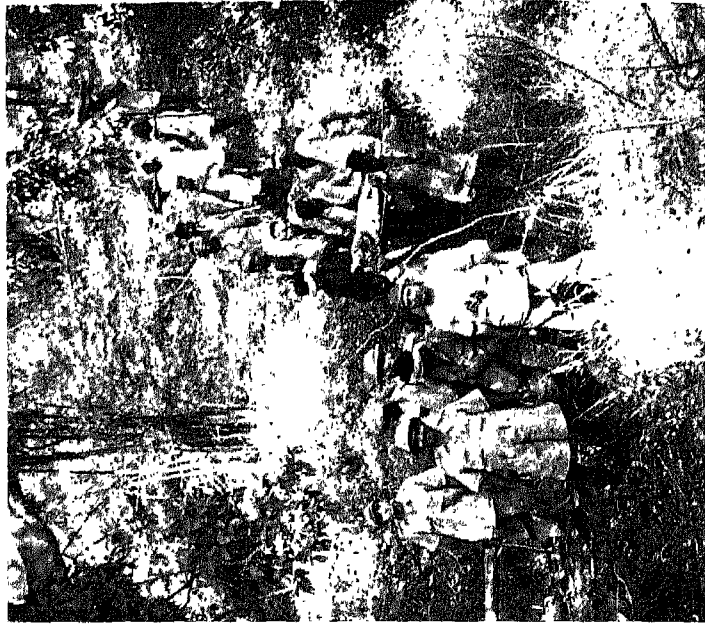
If the dragging signs bring you to a nala and you see the pug marks on the river bank, never go into the nala after it. Go around by the paths to find out if the tiger has come out again, investigating any branch nalas along which it might have proceeded. Having established that it is still in the nala, the machan should be fixed at the first junction with other nalas if these exist.



The Author



A hunter sitting on a machan, hidden from his quarry



A tiger being carried triumphantly back to camp

ARRANGING THE SHOOT

Keep alert for other, natural signs of the tiger's presence. If you hear a noise created by deer, peacocks, monkeys or fowls, there is no need to proceed further, the tiger is in the vicinity, and vultures sitting on the tree-tops give the same indication. Arrange a beat after constructing a machan on a suitable tree. Do not make a lot of noise doing this; conversation should be restricted to signs and if branches have to be cut, this should be done and brought from about half a mile away.

During summer, beats can be operated between the hours of 12 a.m. and 4 p.m. This is the time the tiger sleeps. It will not move about during the heat, will not even look up towards the trees, will not attack anyone and will make no attempt to rush out or charge. It takes shelter under a shady tree and almost invites one to shoot at it. When the tiger is disturbed during the beat from its hide-out, it turns back again and again to see if the beaters have retreated so that it can go back to the same place; it will even hide in dense bushes and go back to its original spot when the beaters have passed by.

If, however, a beat is arranged when the sun is setting, the tiger gets most annoyed and is liable to charge through the stoplines or injure the beaters. When anyone is approaching near to it, it first makes a noise like a growling pig, then a louder one like an aeroplane taking off, and this means that he really is tremendously annoyed. If you should come upon such a situation when merely going for a walk, you should take to your heels immediately, but retreat marching backwards with your face towards the tiger—never show your back to him. If a man, with tremendous courage, faces up to a tiger shouting loudly at it, it will often turn away. I have seen this happen on occasions and I personally saw an aborigine stand up to a tigress with cubs, shouting at her until she ran away. But if your tiger doesn't know the rules, you should take cover behind a tree and shoot, trusting that your aim is good. I assume, of course, that you would never take a walk in the jungle without your gun.

If your beaters inform you that the tiger has retreated into a dense bush and will not come out, do not go in after it. If you cannot spot it from high up in a nearby tree, wait there until it decides to come out. The shelter of a big rock is just as good, but you should post linesmen around so that it cannot escape another way, and instruct them to drive it out with stones and noise. If it comes out at a gallop, it is useless to shoot, the bullet is bound to go wide.

Now that you have roamed about the jungle long enough to find out the watering-places and cool places where the tiger is likely to take refuge, and the likely places where it is liable to escape and the places it might retreat to in the event of a beat, you will have decided on the best place to erect the machan. You should always erect it in the line of a tiger's refuge, i.e., thick jungle or hills, and always at a place where the tiger can be seen at a distance of 100 yards. A spot in the forest, with a clear view, just before it joins the open ground is ideal. You cannot fire upon a tiger when it is concealed in thick growth; when a tiger comes to a bullock cart track or open ground or a clear, tidy space, it will always pause and look around before crossing, but it will not look up into the trees. Now is your chance to shoot, once it commences to cross the open ground it will do so at a gallop.

Having selected the site, you will, presumably, have brought with you everything necessary to construct a machan. If you must cut branches on the spot, a kukri or a saw is less noisy than an axe. The construction of the machan I have already dealt with, but remember to have a piece of bamboo or slender stick fastened in front to support your gun. With this support you should be able to shoot to a distance of forty to sixty yards with ease. If you are not of the temperament to keep perfectly still for long periods, the front of the machan could be covered in up to the level of the gun-rest. Make quite sure that no leaves or branches are obstructing either your view or your line of fire and that the machan is really secure and not likely to collapse at the crucial moment. During the day you might as

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well keep a cot or a bedstead to rest on, but do not make it of bamboo, which is very noisy.

According to the surroundings, post four to five men behind the machan at a distance of 75 to 100 yards and another two men at a further 75 yards. If you should wound the tiger, they will observe its progress. The trees in which these men will take their posts should all be marked beforehand.

The positioning of the linesmen requires both experience and intelligence, the success of the shoot depending so much upon them. They should be posted from the place where the tiger is likely to be lying up to the machan and it is their job to prevent the tiger running through the line. Suitable trees in the line should be marked with a 2-inch thick band of tar and a number and each linesman allotted his own number so that he has no difficulty in finding his tree and position. Their distance from each other should be twenty to twenty-five yards. Where there are junctions of *nalas* or hillocks or where paths lead into dense forest, the men should be posted at a distance of ten to fifteen paces from each other and when they converge upon the machan on each side their distance apart should not be more than ten to fifteen yards, even when the machan is on open ground. The nearest man to the machan should be about 100 to 125 yards away towards the side—not in front.

All these linesmen must be fully trained beforehand in camp. They should be sturdy, brave young men. Old men, boys and those liable to cough or become frightened must never be used. Their training consists of many rehearsals *in situ* with someone acting the tiger—the whole shikar depends upon their ability, experience and intelligence; one blunder can spoil the whole hunt.

The linesmen will be marched up to their stations, bare-footed, in order of their numbers so that there is no disturbance in taking places, and absolute silence is imperative. If the tiger is being driven straight to the shikari they must sit spellbound, but if it is crossing towards them they must clap when it comes

within forty yards, to redirect it towards the shikari. Sometimes the tiger is not co-operative and requires more persuasion, so they clap more vigorously and if it still does not halt they cough loudly and finally throw their turbans towards it, which is usually effective. The only man who checks the advance of the tiger is the one to whom it is coming towards, and even the beaters have to be careful at this point because too much noise or clapping may turn it in the wrong direction or put the tiger into such a rage that it starts roaring and running and then no power on earth can check or control it, and even if heading straight for the machan and the shikari, it is impossible to take aim in time. Frequently other animals, such as stag or pig, precede the tiger in a beat and the linesmen must remain absolutely still and allow them to pass.

When the beaters approach them, the linesmen should come down in turn and join the beaters.

Inexperienced shikaris, especially foreigners, are sometimes fooled by guides into engaging 100 to 200 men for a beat but this is quite excessive. Once you are experienced enough to survey the forest for yourself you will soon know how many you need. For a beat of three to four furlongs all that is necessary is thirty to forty men in the lines, with fifteen to twenty beating, four drummers and four men behind the machan. With a well-trained team of fifty camp followers you could easily carry out a shikar expedition with success. Beats which are miles long are fruitless and show that the management is untrained and inexperienced.

To commence the beat, when you have all reached the kill, you leave the beaters near it and in company with the linesmen proceed along the previously arranged roundabout route. You should yourself be seated in the machan first. In the daytime you may keep a guide or companion with you who is not short-sighted and who might help in spotting the tiger, or, if it should get wounded, might shoot it down. A companion should not be in the machan at night. If your companion is nervous or likely to cry out or cough, a separate machan near

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stopline No. 1 or 2 could be erected for him but he must still be forbidden to make a noise or movement of any sort. Several times in my experience, onlookers have taken fright and cried aloud spoiling the whole shoot. During summer weather a shade of leaves should be constructed over the machan for shelter from the hot sun, which can become unbearable after two or more hours.

By now the linesmen should have reached back to the beaters, each climbing his tree in the stoplines. The beat should be one to two furlongs deep and there should be four or five reliable armed men to see that the beaters pass thoroughly through hills, ravines, nallas and riverbeds, leaving no part untraversed. They should move in an orderly manner, spread out and not one behind the other, both sides proceeding parallel to each other, making allowances for one side perhaps being on plain ground whilst the other is among hills or rough territory.

When the tiger comes, you will not hear it—it moves like a shadow and will slink under cover of bushes, and when you find that branches or grasses are moving, take it for granted that a tiger is coming. If you see it from a distance, do not hurry—let it come a little nearer and remain calm. Remember that you will have only once chance; you might even let it pass you before firing so that if it gets wounded it will not run back on the beaters but continue in its own direction. If it is a couple that come out, try to shoot the male first, but any tiger should be allowed to go scot-free if it is not within your range. The only time you should fire twice at the same tiger is when it has fallen and tries to get up again. If the tiger should be wounded and passes you, and the men behind the machan report it has fallen further on, one of the men should keep on the watch whilst you get down from the machan and in company with other armed men, go to the spot, climb a tree from where it is visible and shoot it again. If there is no suitable tree you may approach it from behind to a distance of about fifty paces, but keep away from it if it is facing you.

SHIKAR

It is only at this stage in the whole shikar that you might face danger. Never try to face a tiger after it is wounded. Neither should all your companions fire at once. They should hold ammunition in reserve for emergencies.

If the wounded tiger has gone beyond the vision of the four men behind the machan, never go in search of it—just return to camp!

When you have shot your tiger and it falls, fire another shot into it from a lighter gun which will not disfigure the skin, get down from the machan and approach it from the side of its back with a loaded gun in hand. Standing at a distance, watch whether the tiger is still breathing or its stomach moving. If you see no sign of this, throw stones at it, and if it makes no movement you can take it for granted that it is dead.

No time should be wasted after the tiger is killed (too frequently hunters make a lot of fuss and an exhibition of celebration), but it should at once be loaded on to a charpoy (cot) to which two strong pieces of wood have been fastened so that twelve to sixteen men can carry it to camp. If you intend starting another beat somewhere else, leave it in the charge of a responsible person.

The dead tiger should be kept in the shade. If kept in the sunshine the hair will start falling out. Hair on the ear and below the lips commences to fall out quite soon after it is killed.

If you are well equipped, with trained men and machans erected in advance, and coolies to carry the game back to camp, you can arrange three beats in a day, but I do not recommend this. It entails a considerable amount of preparation and of exertion, extra manpower, long hours; the sportsman gets tired sitting over the machan, his eyes sore, and consequently gets excited and irritable. In a well-arranged shikar, a tiger can be bagged in an hour—the beat starts half an hour after you are in the machan and within fifteen minutes the tiger should be before you.

If you want to be dead certain of bagging your tiger,

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domesticate him first! When the tiger makes a kill, let him go and give him another one after three or four days, and go on in this manner until five or six baits have been consumed. When the tiger gets easy food and becomes lethargic eating more than it requires, it will remain in the area and become careless. After the first or second kill, find out its hide and if it continues to go to the same place. After about four kills have been made, you can arrange a beat, but the beaters should be very restrained in their efforts, so as not to frighten the tiger away altogether. When the tiger passes in front of the machan, sit perfectly still, although if you can do so silently, you may take a photograph. If it should escape through the lines, erect a machan at this place the next time. In this manner you tame the tiger and will know exactly where it is to be found when your sportsmen and guests come for shikar, and you can then guarantee that they will not return empty-handed. I have myself tried this trick often and always succeeded and with the familiarity of long experience I require no more than eight to ten men for the preliminary beats.

Chapter Four

Tracking a Wounded Tiger

As I mentioned in the last chapter, do not give immediate chase after wounding a tiger. Return the next day, about 11 a.m., accompanied by about fifteen to twenty cow-buffaloes—they will act as your protection if the tiger should attack you as well as smelling it out and engaging it in combat. It is better still to have two or four dogs along with you as well as the buffs. Not only do they smell out the wounded tiger quicker but if you should accidentally come across wild pigs, bears or unwounded tigers and panthers, they will not attack you if you are accompanied by dogs. The dogs engage these animals whilst the shikari gets a chance to shoot.

Once the buffs, marching ahead of you, have found the tiger and it is seriously wounded, they will surround it and make an end of it with their horns. It sometimes happens, too, unfortunately, that they surround a dead tiger and inflict considerable damage on the coat of the animal with their horns unless you can draw them off in time.

When they come upon the wounded tiger, they create a terrible hue and cry which resounds through the jungle. Then you are unable to hear the tiger roar, which would have given you some idea of the extent of its injury. If you cannot see the tiger from the ground send one of your men up a tree to locate it for you; if you should have to go up one yourself, need I say do not leave your gun lying on the ground?

If the buffs engage the tiger it is bound to be killed, so do

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not attempt to fire at it—you are much more likely to hit the buffaloes. Should, however, the tiger take to his heels it will make for its retreat by way of bushes and tall grass and in this way you can see the direction it has taken by the movement of the grass. Halt the buffs and observe from a tall tree the progress of the tiger, but if it should go beyond your vision you should move in further and post men in trees at strategic points within a wide circle of the place in which you assume the tiger to be lurking. One of your men at least is bound to spot it, but he should never shout, instead, indicating its position and the direction it may be taking, by signs. When you have tracked it down, do not approach alone, but always take cover behind the buffs, and, if you have to shoot it, shoot from the cover of the buffs, or after going up a tree.

There are many signs which indicate the extent of a tiger's wounds. If it has not gone far from the spot where it was wounded, then you may take it for granted that it is grievously wounded and sure to die. If it has gone to a watering-place, then it is still very active and strong. Should it take water and then leave the watering-place, it is only slightly injured, in which case, do not follow the tiger but abandon the search. The tiger will recover.

If you find that the tiger has bled profusely in the beginning and thereafter sparingly, you can assume that the wound is superficial or that one shoulder only has been penetrated or broken. Should there be a moderate quantity of blood continuing to flow, with thick blood clots, the stomach has been pierced through, but if only drops of blood are found, the tiger has been wounded in the chest.

The leaves of trees and the surrounding grass will indicate whether or not the bullet has passed right through the tiger. If there are blood marks on both sides of the place where the tiger was when shot, then the bullet has passed through its body, but if only on the one side, then the bullet is still in the tiger.

When the tiger is shot in the chest, it is not likely to remain

active for long and is sure to die fairly soon. Should it be wounded in the belly, there is doubt whether it will live or die. I once followed a tiger wounded in the belly for two days, accompanied by buffaloes, and the tiger remained on the march throughout, keeping at a respectable distance beyond the buffs and outside my range. After a fortnight, this tiger once again made a kill and during the night, over a machan, I shot it dead. When I examined it I found that the first wound, through the belly, was healing quite satisfactorily. On another occasion on which I examined a tiger I had shot, I found the ammunition from a muzzle-loading gun in its belly which had got stuck at the end of the skin on the far side, after piercing the intestines. The intestines, which had been cut through, had joined up again. The tiger was well built and well nourished.

If the tiger has escaped the buffs and is proceeding slowly, try to encircle it by going ahead on one of the sides, and with men posted in trees to act as stoppers, wait for it to come up. The men with the buffs should be so trained that they will know when you have taken up your position and they will then march ahead with the buffs; if it should be necessary to prompt them, do it with a whistling sound. If the tiger is bifurcating but is at a distance of not more than 200 yards, then all you can do is to fire at it at random—one of many shots fired by you will surely incapacitate an already wounded tiger. Should you come near to the tiger whilst trying to encircle it, do not stop immediately and try to shoot. Instead, keep on proceeding away from it, with your eye on it all the time and keeping your gun ready; signal your followers to continue towards you and then all take cover whilst you take good aim and fire.

Always endeavour to follow a wounded tiger on slanting ground. If the tiger is going up a hill, do not follow straight behind but encircle it and come towards it from the steep to the plain. Generally, however, a wounded tiger will not go uphill, preferring to go down a slope.

Sometimes, when a tigress is wounded, the tiger keeps it company, but if you approach the couple, the tiger is likely to

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desert the tigress and take to its heels. When they do keep together, however, do not be tempted to shoot the healthy tiger, concentrate only on the wounded one.

Should it happen that, in spite of the protection of the buffaloes, a wounded tiger attacks you from the front or sides, make no attempt to run away, take cover or climb a tree. Take a hold on your courage and stand absolutely still. Throw your hat or clothing or anything else handy, into the onrushing tiger's face. Whilst it is engaged with this object, take aim and shoot. If you have no weapon to defend yourself with (a deplorable situation), when the tiger is busy with its object and not looking at you, swiftly lie down upon the ground and remain perfectly still, or, according to the situation, if there is time, take cover behind a tree or rock—but only when the tiger is not looking! And you must be very quick indeed. The tiger will then walk away or your companions may arrive in time to distract him from you.

If you find one of your companions being attacked by a tiger, and your fire is likely to hit the man, then, as before, throw your hat or clothing at the tiger, telling the man to lie down and remain still when the tiger releases him, as it will do to grapple with the object. If he lies perfectly still at the tiger's side it will not attack him again. Should the man being mauled and the tiger be at too great a distance to throw anything and you dare not approach, then fire your gun wildly to the sides. This will distract the tiger and he will spare the man, but only to rush at you. So be ready to receive it. Remain very calm and let the tiger approach you to the correct range and then shoot. The bullet should be well aimed because if you miss the tiger will soon finish you off. Should it happen that the tiger has not actually seen you but is merely charging your way, let it pass you before you fire.

If the tiger wounded by you the day before is found dead the following morning, remove it to the camp as soon as possible, skin it and preserve the coat and flesh. Method of skinning and preservation is given in Appendix I and II.

Whilst the dead tiger is being taken to camp it must be protected from contact with the heat of the sun by a covering of leaves, otherwise the skin will rapidly discolour.

In instances when a natural kill of a tiger or panther is reported, there is frequently not sufficient time to arrange a large, highly-organized beat, and there may not be sportsmen on the spot for whom the arranging of it becomes worth while. Then a shikari will quickly fix up a beat with as few as five to fifteen beaters. With the kill already located and the tiger probably very close by, a machan cannot be constructed because the activity would drive the tiger away. The shikari, therefore, must shoot from the ground, or if he is not so bold, he may keep a ladder beside a tree and shoot from the ladder. You should choose a place at the side of the path the tiger will be driven out from, not straight in front; it is more difficult to shoot a tiger from the front and the tiger would see you as it emerged.

Do not go straight to the tiger's lying-up place, make a circle round it and take up your place beyond and in its line of retreat. Clean up the place you are going to sit on so that leaves and branches do not make a noise as you move about, and you must take cover—you may cut and use tree branches for camouflage, but never sit in the open.

In large beats only the stoppers go with the shikari, the beaters remaining behind. In this case, the beaters will accompany you to the chosen spot so that they will know exactly where you are and can then make a quick, straight beat to you. They will return to the kill to start the beat with the same out-flanking method and the stoppers will take up position.

It is quite possible, when moving about so near to the tiger's lie-up, that the activity will drive it out before the beating starts, so the shikari must be in position and ready with loaded gun. This contingency can be avoided if the beat is arranged in the middle of the day when the tiger is sleeping or lazing in the heat.

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If shooting from the cover of a tree, the tree must be on your left side, unless, of course, you are left-handed, when the position is reversed. Use a powerful rifle, e.g. a .375 Magnum, or .405, .423, .470, .577 or any other equally powerful weapon with a lethal or soft-nose ball, which will burst inside the tiger and not pierce through, and aim for the animal's shoulder, chest or neck. If it should gallop past you, remain ready because it is likely to halt after a short distance and look back, and if it is within firing range and shows its broadsides, you will have another opportunity. It is pure tomfoolery to shoot it in the back when galloping. When the tiger is standing still, a powerful shot at the joint of the tail may break through its heart, but one's aim has to be sure. The tiger should be allowed to approach to twenty or twenty-five yards before you fire; if you are suitably dressed and stand like a statue, a tiger will walk right past you.

If you fire and wound the tiger and it gets wild, tearing up trees, crushing stones and roaring loudly and comes galloping up to you without noticing you, and you, unfortunately, have only a single-barrel gun, do not reload the weapon there and then but try to stealthily take cover and let the reloading synchronize with the roars of the tiger so that it will not hear you. If it should hear you, it will be on you within seconds. Do not fire again whilst it is still rushing about but wait until it settles down—to miss it whilst it is in a wild state is an open challenge to death. If you are over-awed and trembling with excitement, which is frequently the case, do not fire again at all, but remain perfectly still until the tiger goes away, or dies from the first wound. It will help you to remain still if you close your eyes or lie down when the tiger cannot notice you because of its uproar.

When it is desired to shoot tiger, panther and other animals without organizing a beat, a machan is erected at a suitable place near a water-hole or at the side of (never on) the regular tracks of the animal. A machan is always used for shooting at

night. As previously said, the machan should be between ten to sixteen feet up the tree and twenty to forty yards from the place where you intend to fix the kill. It is admitted that a tiger can jump as high as eighteen feet, but during my vast experience I have never seen nor heard of a tiger jumping to that height after being wounded.

The following points should be borne in mind before the machan is constructed. There should be no honeycomb on the tree nor should it be the abode of red ants, neither should it be hollow, a favourite place of scorpions and reptiles. The machan should be woven as far as possible with the live branches of the tree, and not laced with cut branches, for they will be dead and withered by the next day; after the kill is made you may cover up with cut branches from the same tree. If there are no live branches to shield the machan you may do this with cut ones for the night of the kill, but after the kill is made they must be thrown away—a long distance, out of sight of the tiger, and new green leaves used in their stead. The bed foundation of the machan should be one made of cloth straps, or if it is a charpoy it should be well strung and the strings should not be white; it must be noise-proof. For foreigners who are not accustomed to squatting, a big, easy chair should be placed over the machan bed, facing the kill. If it is not feasible to keep an easy chair on the machan a cradle should be made of straps with a mattress over it and bamboo sticks tied securely to support the feet of the sportsman and also to support the back. The guide will sit on the machan beside the sportsman and it must be borne in mind that all parts of their bodies must be hidden behind a screen of leaves. Another piece of bamboo should be tied in front on which to rest the gun and you should test it for position.

The next thing is to fix the kill. It should be fastened to a tree or pole which is on the track of the tiger, in an open place so that the tiger can see it from a long distance. It must be fastened by the front leg to enable the animal to move about freely, with a piece of rope about three feet in length from the

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tree or pole, and a bell fastened round its neck so that the tiger can hear the sound at a distance and come attracted to the kill.

The rope or chain with which the kill is fastened must not be white, or a light colour and pieces of rope or branches of trees should be cleared away from the place. The rope must be very strong so that the tiger may not remove the kill, as it is allowed to do when a beat is to be arranged, in which case a much thinner rope is used so that it can be broken. If the animal has a white or light-coloured forehead, rub it with cow dung or earth.

Any of the following animals may be used as bait for tiger—horse, bullock, pig, donkey and buffalo, but the usual custom in the Central Provinces is to tie a buffalo calf. The best age is between one and two years. If it is too young and tender a panther or hyena may get it, and if too old a youngish tiger may not be able to kill it.

It is not difficult to find a place to fix the kill and the machan because it is known that the tiger loves to frequent water-holes and to walk on footpaths, courses of rivers or nalas and through the forest roads constructed by the Forest Department to safeguard against bush fires. It roams about continually throughout the night and it has been estimated that a tiger walks about twenty to twenty-five miles in a night.

The place where the bait is tied must be clean to enable the animal to rest and the trees and bushes around it should be trimmed so that it cannot hide during the hours of darkness. A tiger cannot smell its bait.

Tie the bait to the appointed place an hour before sunset and release it, if not killed, an hour after sunrise; during the winter season and the rains, the time for tying and untying should be advanced an hour. There should be a patch of grass near to the tree where the bait is tied, for the animal to feed on, or a little cut grass placed close to the tree.

If you find next morning that the tiger has visited the bait, roamed around and left without touching it, you will know that there is something wrong with your procedure and that attention has not been paid to the above points. Anything

which you have disturbed or something left behind which is foreign to the jungle will alert the tiger.

Perhaps you would like to visit the kill personally in the morning, instead of sending out a man to report. In this case you should go two hours after sunrise during the winter and rains if the kill is in dense forest, and one hour after in summer. If you go by jeep or car you should slow down the vehicle to a speed of ten to twelve miles an hour when you are about a mile from the spot and do not speak loudly, then abandon the car when three to four furlongs away. Observation should be made from a distance, climbing a tree to see properly if necessary. If the tiger is not in the neighbourhood and the kill has been made, approach carefully with loaded gun, and cover the kill with leaves so that vultures may not spoil it. If the tiger has broken the rope and carried off the kill, the procedure will be that outlined in Chapter III.

When you find the kill on the spot where it was tied and the machan is ready, make no disturbance in the vicinity and do not allow your companions to roam about, nor even to relieve themselves nearby. Next test the strength of the machan by jumping quietly in each corner—it would be no comedy to tumble down on top of the tiger—and also make sure that it is perfectly concealed, even from underneath, then return to camp.

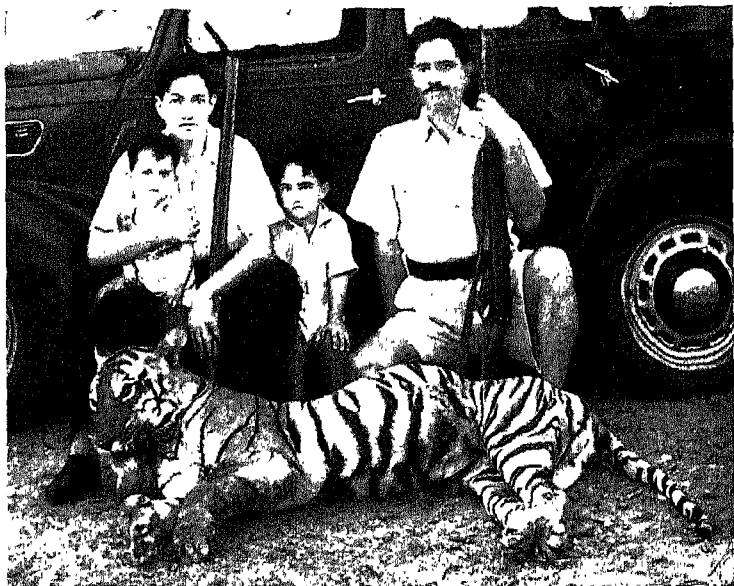
During the summer you should take up your position over the machan an hour before sunset, and in the winter and rains period two hours before sunset, and if the jungle is very dense even earlier. Your kit will all be in order—nothing white; no white pillow-cases or sheets; the mattress thick and noise-proof. Your clothes should be olive green for winter and the rains and dark grey or khaki in summer; they should not be stiff, which might scrape or rustle such as duckcloth or jean. When mosquitoes are active you should wear a cap with ear-flaps, to prevent you twitching your head about.

The bed or chair on the machan is placed so that your feet point towards the kill, or, if you are lying face upwards, the



The author with two live tiger cubs

Mr. Purshe, the Sub-Divisional Officer, shot this fine tiger under the supervision of the author





A deft move of the foot,
and Jamshed Butt de-
flects the head of an
angry python



Colonel Wallis display-
ing the tiger he shot
with the author's help

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kill should be on your left. Your gun should be in your hands the moment the tiger is feasting on the kill. First fit in your torch. Headlights are inclined to reflect the light back into your eyes from the shrubs and leaves. If you do use headlights, give them a test out in advance. Next, with your gun loaded, any leaves or branches which are interfering with the passage of light from the torch must be quietly cut away. It is best to have two guns ready loaded—one might jam or a pin or spring break at the crucial moment.

It is better to sit alone over the machan if you are brave enough. A companion, especially an aborigine, has no enthusiasm for shikar as you have and it is almost impossible to keep him still and make him obey the rules. The rules of night-sitting in a machan are important if you want to get your tiger. They are:

1. No talking. (A companion would want to talk.)
2. No movement. (There is not sufficient room for two or three persons on a machan, and if squeezed in they would become cramped and want to keep changing places.)
3. No sleeping. (If you are alone you will be more watchful when dependent entirely upon yourself.)
4. No coughing. (You will be well covered with jacket and scarves and have no inclination to cough, or if you must, can do so quietly into your blanket, whilst an aborigine, wearing practically no clothes, will cough continually from the cold.)
5. No smoking. (A companion, if a European and accustomed to smoking, might get irritable and restless when deprived of it—a native may have other habits which you might have to forbid.)

Your preparations should now all be made. You will have paid attention to your person—no perfume or oil should be used and you must don clean clothes, the smell of perspiration being strong enough to alert any sensitive animal. Do not have

a heavy meal before going to the machan and do not take food with you; a full stomach will make you drowsy and you will lose your alertness. You may take a bottle of water for thirst, and chewing-gum or lozenges which are not strong-smelling to ward off coughing. A bottle should also be taken for urine, but if you do not have one, the urine should be passed on the thick trunk of the tree and in this way it will go down noiselessly. Once you are on the machan, do not start imagining that during the night some wild animal will ascend the tree or that the tiger will leap on you on the machan if it is wounded—such thoughts are very bad for your nerves.

Before you go up to the machan, you and your companion (in spite of what I have said, I am sure you will want one with you) must ease yourselves, and when you have mounted the machan the ladder should be taken away and your men should take up their positions some distance away, but within call for if you should require them.

When you see birds flying about in the distance and hear the cry of the sambhar, you can take it for granted that the tiger is coming that way. If there is still daylight, face the way the tiger is approaching, without peering at it, lift your gun and rest it on the wooden bar, and when it comes within range, shoot. A sportsman new to tiger shooting experiences several sensations when he sees the tiger come into view for the first time. His heart will begin to throb heavily, he will have difficulty in breathing and the legs and hands will start to tremble, but if he takes a few very deep breaths and keeps still he will very soon recover. Should he be unable to compose himself, he must not attempt to shoot the tiger but remain sitting on the machan.

Once the tiger comes within range, have a go at it and not lose the opportunity. During the night, by torchlight, you cannot shoot at a range of more than twenty to forty yards, but in daylight you have the much longer range of sixty to eighty yards. If the tiger has come too close and is heading towards you, do not shoot, but remain as still as a statue; when

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it has passed, lift your gun, avoiding contact with any leaves or branches. Should you make a noise and the tiger is attracted towards the machan, again assume the "still as stone" pose and remain so until the animal is distracted by something else. Only when it is engaged in its own pursuits can you have another go at it.

A tigress with young ones will come to the kill as soon as it becomes dark. Young cubs, two or three months old, are left in the hide-out so these will not be smaller than dog-size. The cubs will feast on the kill while the tigress sits at a distance watching, roaring slightly because she is annoyed with the cubs for feeding without looking right and left every now and then. The cubs, however, will take no notice but continue with their feeding. If you have decided that the cubs are grown enough to maintain themselves, you are free to shoot the tigress, leaving the cubs unmolested—these are your future shikar. Should the tigress appear first, alone, observe whether it is in milk, and if so do not shoot, you would be committing a crime. But supposing you accidentally, or through ignorance, shot a tigress in milk, then it is imperative that you return the next day with about 100 men to find the hide-out and rescue the cubs. The route the tigress took has to be tracked and followed, and all bushes, ravines, rocks, water-holes and nalas thoroughly beaten. If you track them to a den deep in the rocks where they cannot be reached, it is only necessary to station some men in nearby trees at 4 o'clock in the afternoon—the young ones will come out in the early evening and cry aloud for their mother. Cover up the place they came out of so that they cannot return and catch them by putting a blanket over them, or with a noose, and transfer them to a cage. If they bite or scratch you, it is comforting to know that their teeth and claws are not nearly so poisonous as an adult tiger's. I was myself once bitten by a cub and the wound did not become septic. It is only necessary to apply carbolic acid.

Older cubs can be captured for pets in much the same way. After the tigress has been shot, the cubs will run to it and

remain with the carcase for some time. You can stay in the machan or return to camp and collect the cubs later.

Very young cubs should be fed on boiled cow or goat milk, but cow-buff milk requires mixing with water. A little boiled mutton can be given them, after cutting into small pieces. They will become quite tame pets after only a few days.

When it becomes dark, do not continue to watch from the machan. You must now begin to listen. Lie down to rest and do not get up at every little noise and rustle. Although you will not hear the tiger coming, it moves so gently, making no more sound than a bird, you will hear it eating the kill. It makes so much noise eating that it can be heard half a mile away, and has been known to wake up a sleeping man. The tiger devours everything, skin, flesh and bones, and when breaking bones the noise is like cracking sticks; when it swallows there is a loud "hup hup" sound.

After the animal has been about five or ten minutes at the kill you may sit up and try to find out whether it is a tiger or hyena (a bear or jackal makes very little noise and you would not bother sitting up for it), both of them making a similar amount of noise, and in the dark they can resemble each other. If a hyena is feeding, do not disturb it. Although it is said that a tiger will not feed after a hyena, this is not true; what generally happens is that the tiger will hurry up and drive the hyena away and then commence eating.

Having got your tiger on the kill you will take your already loaded gun and take aim in the darkness. When you find that you are quite steady and not nervous, switch on the torch which is fixed to the gun. The light will flash directly over the tiger and the moment you see the tiger in the light, that is the moment to shoot. It will run away if you move the light about or keep it on too long. The kill should have been placed in such a direction that the tiger will have its shoulders towards you (remember that a tiger begins to eat from the buttocks of the kill). Make no attempt to shoot it in the head and if you cannot aim at the shoulder-joint, then any part of the neck or shoulders

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will do, or even the chest. And now is not the time to remember the last time you missed, or you will certainly miss again. The very greatest of shikaris fire wide at times, from over-exertion or over-excitement, after being awake all night or when not feeling well, and sometimes when coming upon a tiger unexpectedly.

After you have shot your tiger and it falls down, shoot at it again immediately—do not think for a minute that the first shot has killed it. By a mistake of this kind many a tiger has run away wounded and many a human life been lost. The second shot should be from an L.G. or a smaller bore rifle so as not to spoil the skin.

If you have missed the tiger and it has gone off into the jungle either call your men and return to camp or, if you have bedding with you, lie down and go to sleep. The tiger is not likely to return to the kill again that night. But, strangely enough, if two tigers (or more) are at the kill and you drive them away with a wide shot, they may return again later, or there is the odd chance that another tiger may accidentally find the kill, so it might be worth your while to remain silent and watchful. I have myself killed two tigers in one night.

If you wound the tiger and it has gone in the direction of your camp, I will emphasize what I have said already, that you must remain in the machan all night. In any case, another tiger may come to feed off the kill and you will be rewarded. It is incorrect to say that a tiger eats only its own kill. It will devour any other tiger's or panther's kill, animals wounded by sportsmen, and even finish off evil-smelling old carcases. You can nearly always rely on a tiger visiting the kill for three nights and sometimes five, to finish off the bones.

A tiger that has once been frightened by gun-fire will become extremely wary and may watch the kill from an elevated place nearby for hours before being satisfied that all is in order. They sometimes become so suspicious that they will leave that particular part of the jungle for good and gradually acquire the habit of taking their fill off a kill when it is made

and then forgetting about it. The only way to bag one of these is to be in the machan with the live bait tied underneath, ready to get the tiger as it pounces on the bait. If you have watched a tiger when it is preparing to kill a wild animal, noticed its grace and the delicate lightness of its movements, and how, hiding in a small bush or low on the ground, it will wait until its prey is about twenty to thirty yards away before leaping like lightning, then if you can shoot at this moment you can save the life of the bait.

If you know the routine of the jungle, you can get your tiger without a bait or a kill. The wild animals leave the jungle about 9 o'clock at night to go to the plains and fields where they stay until about 4 a.m. The tiger also goes and hides near the places where these animals will be feeding and drinking, gets its prey and returns to the jungle after the other animals have returned. As you cannot approach a tiger in the open fields or plains, you should erect your machan near one of the entrances to the jungle after you have satisfied yourself that it is a regular route of the tiger.

If you have shot a tiger from a machan one night, either with bait or without, it sometimes happens that a mate will make a search for its companion the following night, shouting and roaring about the spot all night, and you have thus the opportunity to take a second one.

Should a tiger see you in the machan and after roaring round the kill does not come to take it, you can try a ruse on it. Call to your men, talking loudly, or, if you have a companion, talk loudly and, making a noise, he should get down from the machan and with some of the men, go noisily back to camp. Meantime, you will conceal yourself carefully, and wait. When the tiger is satisfied that the party has left the jungle, it will come for the kill. The same trick can be used for panther. If, however, after half or one hour, the animal does not visit the spot, it can be taken for granted that it will not come that night.

During the summer heat, the tiger will play and lie down in

the cool mud of the water-holes, and can usually be found there between 9 and 11 a.m. Send out scouts to find out these places and erect a machan early in the morning. If the tiger uses two water-holes, post men at the one without the machan to drive it towards you. You must be in the machan before 8 a.m. You may, in a case like this, shoot the tiger from the ground without the aid of a machan, but you must reconnoitre first to see that the ground is clear of noisy undergrowth, and that there is something for you to take cover behind; examine the hinterland to see how far the tiger will have vision of your approach, and make sure that its line of retreat, if wounded, is not the one you are on. It is advisable in this case to keep a shikari companion near you, ready to shoot in an emergency, or, alternatively, have two loaded guns ready. If the tiger is asleep, it is better to wake it by throwing stones at it because it is difficult to take a good aim when it is in a recumbent position. When the tiger is alerted, it stands up, looks this way and that, and gives a good broadside to shoot at. If it is wounded and commences to run away, keep on firing like a machine-gun, not bothering about vital parts, but if you miss and it runs away there is no use attempting another shot, and as I have stressed already: never go after it, wounded or unwounded, that day.

In the summer a tiger will die from a wound much easier than in the winter. It finds the great heat both outside and inside itself so unbearable that it roams about panting heavily with its tongue hanging out and is always extremely tired.

Chapter Five

Panther and Bear Hunt

WHEN shooting panther, very similar arrangements and precautions are taken as those for tiger. The kill will be different—a dog or a goat, or a very small buffalo calf, or a killed black-faced monkey. An ass, small pony, small bullock or small boar, may also be used. A dog would be secured by a chain, donkey or buff with strong rope; a goat should be tied up on a machan five to six feet high with a wooden fence around so that it will not fall off and strangle itself, otherwise a hyena might kill it; a monkey, after shooting it, should be hung on a tree five to six feet up. If the panther is a frequent visitor to a village you may tie the dog or goat on the ground and sit near, but take care that the kill does not see you, or it will not cry out—to attract the leopard.

If a panther has killed some animal in a village and has been scared away by the villagers, it is sure to return after some time to visit its kill. If it has entered a house and has been closed in by the villagers, do not try to shoot it during the night. In the morning you may shoot it from the top of the roof or through a hole in the wall. Should this not be practicable, get two strong and bold persons with spears about six feet long. They will point the spears towards the animal while it seeks to escape and this will halt it sufficiently for you to shoot it. A shot-gun with L.G. both barrels charged, and a repeat, is the best weapon.

Never keep the door open when you are forced to enter a room after a panther, because in spite of all precautions

it will take to the doorway and wound not only you but your companions and the spectators outside.

A man-eating panther is more dangerous than a tiger. It turns man-eater due to old age or some disability on account of which it is incapable of pursuing any other game. Whenever I have shot a man-eater I have always found it to be disabled. A man-eater tiger will generally lift men whom it comes across in the jungle, but a panther will enter villages, get into the houses through the roof or tatta (matting) enclosure (doorway), carefully remove the blanket or quilt from the sleeping person, and carry him away by the neck in such a way that its victim cannot make a sound to raise the alarm. Some people who were fortunate enough to escape from the jaws of a man-eating panther have told to me their story. One of them, while sleeping, well covered by a blanket, felt something touching him. He thought it was a dog and, without opening his eyes, drove it away. After some time the performance was repeated. This time, the man tried to strike the intruder hard with his hand. His hand fell upon the mouth of a panther, which caught his hand and started dragging him away. The man, fortunately, kept his presence of mind and he grabbed a stick from the burning fire with his free hand as he was dragged past, and struck the animal in the eyes, whereupon the panther dropped his hand and took to its heels. Unfortunately, dogs cease barking on seeing a panther. There are instances where, with a dog secured on each side of the cot of a sleeping man, the man-eater panther has picked up the man, carried him away, and no one in the village has known until next morning. Like a tiger, a panther seldom attacks a man when he is alert or moving about, but usually carries him off when he is sleeping. On a dark night it might carry off a man sitting quietly or merely dozing, but during the day you can move about freely in the area of a man-eating panther. You are safe in a strongly closed-up house, but in hot weather it is impossible to sleep indoors. Then, if there is a man-eater about, select an open space and clear away all the surrounding shrubs

in which it might take cover within 200 yards of the place in which you intend to sleep. Put up a petrol lamp on a post near to you and a few hurricane lanterns at suitable distances on posts; assign three or four persons sentry duty, taking turns one by one, armed with a gun or spear and remaining on their feet during their turn of duty, ready to spot the leopard immediately it breaks cover.

If you sit on the kill of a man-eater panther, never sit alone nor on the ground and always have an armed man with you. There is an instance of a panther carrying off a man and when chased leaving him dead on the ground; a shikari, taking advantage of the kill, sat on the ground beside the dead man and sent the villagers back to their homes. The panther came stealthily and carried off the shikari! Even on a tree or machan never sit alone when after a man-eater, and certainly never leave the ladder in position. A panther will not normally climb into a sixteen-foot high machan and if it tries there is enough noise and movement to give you time to be ready for it.

The usual way to bag a jungle leopard (not a man-eater) is from a machan rather than in haka (beat). Your machan should be ready by 2 or 3 p.m. because a panther, although a cunning and secretive animal, comes to the kill just after sunset, and your men will hardly have had time to return from seating the shikaris in the machan (noisily, so as to make the panther think everyone has left), than it will be on the kill. If you want to see the panther, in light, before it reaches the kill, you may put up a lantern at ten to twelve yards from the kill and two to three yards in height, allowing it to shine towards the kill. The panther will not be afraid of a light shone on it provided it has not been shot at before in light. You should be in the machan at least an hour before sunset and if you suspect the panther is in hiding nearby you must send men in that direction, talking loudly to frighten it away whilst you take your place, and then they should leave the forest still talking loudly. The kill should be brought near the machan after you

have taken your position and securely tied so that it cannot be taken away.

Even if you expect to bag your trophy by 8 or 9 p.m. you should be prepared to stay overnight. It is possible that the animal might be only wounded. If it does not come to the kill by 9 p.m. there can be a number of reasons for this. (1) It has seen you on the machan. (2) It has got a kill somewhere else. (3) It has been scared by wild dogs. (4) It is an experienced animal and does not come to a kill a second time.

By 10 p.m. you should call your men and try another trick. It is not such a childish procedure as one may imagine, because it does work. Let the men make a lot of noise about the machan, get some superfluous things down and remove some of the covering so that it may give the appearance of being deserted. If the panther has not come to the kill because of reason No. 1, it should come within half an hour of your men leaving again, provided you are well hidden. Should it not come within an hour, one of the other three alternatives is operating and you should not waste any more time, but honourably retire for the night, not waiting any later than 10.30 or 11 p.m.

Like a tiger, a panther approaches soundlessly. If you should see it from your machan before the daylight has faded, standing or waiting near the kill, do not wait, but if within range fire at once. If you bring it down with a big rifle, use a .22 or a 12-bore S.G. for the second shot. Personally, I prefer a 12-bore L.G. shot at its neck, shoulder or head, for a panther. Keep L.G. in both chambers of a 12-bore and repeat. Again, I remark, do not repeat after a miss while the animal is running. It will come back again if you sit quietly—it will even come back after two or three shots provided it has not been wounded. The very big panthers should be shot with a bullet.

If you find the panther on a kill whilst you are going to the machan, you may shoot with impunity provided you are not nervous and can place your shots accurately. A panther does not attack immediately upon being wounded but runs off in the direction it is facing, but it would certainly attack if you went after it.

For tracking a wounded panther, follow the same procedure as for tiger. A wounded panther will take to water to keep flies and ants off its wounds, but unlike the tiger, it will not lie in water in summer when it is healthy, although it invariably does when wounded, and has been known to die in the water.

When a panther's kill is so heavy that it cannot take it up a tree, it will leave it on the ground and mount the tree to keep watch so that other animals cannot spoil it. There are instances on record of a shikari putting his machan on the same tree on which a panther is hiding and the animal has not been detected, nor has it run away. At night it tries to come down when the shikari is somewhat taken aback to find a panther over his head. In such circumstances, he should come down from the machan, leaving his companions to remain so that the panther may not run away. He should secure a good position on an adjoining tree and bag the panther. Sometimes, when wild dogs chase a panther it will mount a tree and remain there for days if the dogs do not move away, and it will also climb trees to catch monkeys.

The panther is an expert in merging with its surroundings and even after seeing it moving, I have been unable to spot it when still at a distance of twenty-five to thirty yards. This is one of the reasons why haka is unsuitable for panther. It may be driven out but can conceal itself and refuse to move in any of a number of places before it reaches the shikari, and can also dart like lightning through the stoppers' lines. On several occasions I can remember, a stopper has seen a panther come out and hide itself in a bush without the knowledge of the beaters. The stopper sent for me and when I came to the spot he continued to point to the bush, but at five to ten yards I could not locate it. Thinking the stopper to have been mistaken, I pelted some stones at the bush and, to the surprise of all, it darted forth with a roar at amazing speed. In such cases, it is best to select a spot where the panther may go *after* being driven out of the bush, the shikari to stand under cover ready with his 12-bore. Have a rifle with you too; if it is beyond the range of a

12-bore and it is stationary you can use your rifle. If it does not give you its side, shoot in the head, with L.G., only when it is fifteen to twenty yards away, coming straight towards you, and put in a second shot when it is down. Be very careful after you have shot a panther, because it will frequently feign death and then charge when you come within range.

If you are short of time or do not want to sit on a machan for the night, haka is the only alternative, but it only requires to be a small one. Generally, this animal does not go far from its kill but remains hiding under bushes and rocks. It is not necessary to make a lot of noise, but the beaters will require to throw stones into bushes and strike at the trees with sticks as it is more difficult to drive out than is the tiger. If it does not come out in the first drive, the beaters must return and go through an adjoining section of the jungle, and continue until it does.

If you suddenly come upon a panther on a cart road whilst moving on a bullock cart, or in a jeep, the panther will be frightened and run off. If it goes beyond range, get down from your conveyance carefully so that the animal cannot see you, let the cart or jeep go on whilst you run back and take cover at the side of the road. The panther will certainly come back on to the old path and you can bag it. Both tiger and panther do not normally deviate from a path they have decided to follow. If it is going the same way as you, pass it quickly in the conveyance, which you send on for three or four furlongs, and then await the animal in cover as before.

If you want to hunt a bear you will have to first find out its usual hide-out. It generally makes its abode beneath big rocks where a man will be unable to penetrate, but it comes out of its hide at sunset in search of food. In summer it goes first for drinking water. During the rains, it will walk in the open in broad daylight as well. In the winter it comes out of its hide earlier and retires later than usual. A bear usually walks on the footpaths and roads frequented by man.

To locate a bear, you should visit the watering-holes early in the morning and find out from its pug marks if it has been in the locality. You can follow the marks to its cave and kill it after beating it out. To kill a bear, it is not necessary to erect a machan. If it is sleeping you can go right up to it and shoot it. Although dangerous and strong, it is lazy. After being wounded it keeps marching on ahead no matter how many shots it has received and does not run like tigers and panthers. After a short distance, it takes to the ground and starts sobbing like a man in distress. Its sobbing can be heard a long distance away.

Like the tiger and panther, it will not attack unprovoked, but when it does have cause to do so, it makes a lot of noise, and drawing near, stands on its hind legs, but takes a long time getting ready for the attack. It cannot run fast and if a man is fleetfooted a bear cannot catch him. It is a vegetarian and frequents only the places where fruits and leaves of wild plants are available. If you come across pug marks under a fruit-bearing tree, you should hide yourself nearby and wait for the bear's arrival. If the place is in the forest you can expect it soon after sunset, but if it is near a village its visit will be later in the night. It loves wild ants and honey and will go up trees and drive away the bees to obtain some honey. You are almost sure to see pug marks beside a tree with honeycombs on it and if the bees are buzzing about very angrily all day you know that the bear has paid them a visit. Don't go near, because the bees will attack you at once; if they do, cover your face and head with your jacket and lie down behind a big tree or stone, remaining still and quiet until they have deserted you and you can slip away.

A female bear with cubs is much more likely to attack a man than the male and you should keep out of her way.

The penis of a bear is very hard, like a bone, and when copulating the bear will take hours for an orgasm while other animals take minutes. Bear fat is used a lot in medicines and is very efficacious in healing wounds and relieving bodily pains.

Chapter Six

I Learn About the Jungle

I SAW my first tiger when I was thirteen years old, although it was to be another three years before I shot one. In November 1916, when I was training in forest contracting at camp Uskali, I went with our agent, Rajwali, and a forest guard who was a shikari, to shoot deer. The wheat was green and during the night the wild animals would come out of the jungle to feed on it. We settled down; the air was cold and crisp and the full moon spread a mantle of white over the earth. Presently a few stags appeared and at the same time there was a slight rustle on our right in a bush. Babu Khan, the shikari, who was preparing his gun, ceased and we all looked towards the bush. A big tiger was hiding in the long grass watching the stags and waiting for them to approach. The wind was blowing in our direction from the grazing animals; they would walk a little, halt, look around, smell and then if satisfied move on. I could feel my two companions trembling but I was so fascinated that I sat perfectly still, awed by the wonder of it all. When the stags were about 150 yards away, the wind changed to the opposite direction and the animals immediately scenting the tiger began to cry out loudly and halted. The tiger left its hide-out and moved as silently as the sun rising over the horizon, disappearing like a wraith into the thick forest.

I learned my two first lessons from this incident. One, in face of danger to sit immobile; two, to be constantly watchful of the direction of the wind.

SHIKAR

All wild animals can smell the shikari instantly if the wind is blowing from him towards them. Birds, peacocks and fowls cannot smell, but they are so sharp-sighted that it serves the same purpose. Animals, however, though seeing, will not comprehend if there is no movement, and will walk right up to a shikari if he can remain still enough.

The village of Uskali was a distance of six miles from Rahatgaon where I had to go twice a week to take wages to the labourers. I had to go on foot, leaving in the mornings and returning in the evenings, and sometimes it was dark before I got back to Uskali. On these occasions I used to feel nervous when I came to the spot where we had seen the tiger and wondered how I should deal with it if I met it again. I always carried a big stick and a large, sharp knife with me and in my innocence I decided I would break its skull with the stick and when it fell pierce its stomach with the knife. Thus comforted, I would reach home in a happy frame of mind.

In February of 1917, I was sent to the village of Dhega, near Chirapatla in Betul district, where I started working with Chaudhary Hakim Khan. There were a lot of peacocks around this district and I used to shoot them with M.L. guns borrowed from the Gond shikaris. From this village also, I had to go to Rahatgaon once a week to take wages, and Rahatgaon was a distance of twenty-two miles from Dhega. It is not comfortable to travel on bullock carts during the daytime because of the heat of the sun and the dust, so I used to leave after my evening meal, and generally fall asleep after the first two or three miles. The bullocks knew the way instinctively and negotiated the hills, nalas, dry stream beds and tracks entirely on their own, never upsetting the cart and giving way automatically to any other cart coming from the opposite direction.

One day the bullocks reached Rahatgaon in the morning before sunrise and stopped in front of our bungalow whilst I was still asleep. When my brother came out in the morning and saw me there he was extremely angry and lectured me

severely about sleeping through the dangerous forest when I should be constantly alert. But his advice fell on deaf ears.

A few weeks later I left Dhega about 9 p.m. and by 11 p.m. I had reached Khakar Pati which is difficult country, with a steep hill on one side and a deep ravine on the other. I woke up when I felt the bullocks running very fast and the night was so dark that at first I could not see anything. Gradually, I saw at the bottom of the ravine the shine of the Ganjal River and I knew I was nearing Ghatgarpati, a favourite roaming ground of tigers, and I also knew that the bullocks had seen a tiger. I began to shout and roar loudly in an effort to convince the tiger that there was another tiger in the cart and it would therefore leave the bullocks alone. Just to make sure, I lighted with a match a bundle of dry grass which I used to keep in the cart for just such an occasion, and threw it outside the cart. It must have had some effect because nothing further happened except that it kept me very much awake trying to calm down the bullocks which were behaving in an hysterical manner. Rahatgaon was still eighteen miles ahead, but the village of Mahukhal was only two miles and I decided I would stay there for the rest of the night. Partly singing, partly driving the bullocks, and looking nervously about all the time, I reached Mahukhal, but after some time there I regained my courage. Ah, I thought contemptuously, the tiger is a very timid animal, so easily frightened away, compared to man who is very brave, so I climbed up again and set off into the dark night. I reached Rahatgaon about 5 a.m., dismounted and went to bed. As I had been awake all night. I was still sleeping heavily at 9 a.m. and was awakened by my brother curious to know at what time I had arrived, I told him the events and this time he scolded me for making the journey at night. When I laughed and said how timid a tiger was and there was nothing to be afraid of he told me how a tiger could kill not only the bullocks but the driver if it was hungry enough, and, besides, what would have happened if the bullocks had fallen down the ravine or taken a wrong track? Even the aborigines who lived

in the district never drove bullock carts alone at night but went in groups of three or four carts. That was the end of my night journeys to Rahatgaon.

I was returning from Rahatgaon one day soon afterwards and had unyoked the bullock cart at Mahukhal to allow the bullocks to rest. It was about 7 p.m. and I was taking some refreshments and talking to Nawaz Khan, the forest guard, when we saw a huge blue bull coming at speed towards the village, with about a dozen wild dogs in chase. Two or three dogs at a time would jump over the bull and catching hold of its ears, eyes and neck with their teeth, remain hanging on while the bull continued to run. Other dogs would bite at the stag's hind legs. Once the stag gave such a heavy kick to a dog that it went up in the air like a football and fell with a thud, but these dogs are so strong that in seconds it was on its feet again attacking. The dogs overpowered the stag and it fell down about 200 yards from the village, to which it was running for protection. Little did it know that the villagers were more cruel than the dogs and that they certainly would not leave the bull alive. The moment it fell, the forest guard was calling for a knife to be brought to him so that he could perform the Halal (to slaughter an animal according to Mohammedan law—to cut its throat). I told him I had a knife with me so the guard, two other Gonds and I went towards the bull. Seeing us, the dogs ran away and the blue bull also tried to get up but it was so badly wounded in the eyes and legs that it could not succeed. The Gonds first cut off its knee joints when it tried to run away and then with an axe gave it such a powerful blow on the forehead that it dropped senseless. After that we performed the Halal.

Blue bull is the largest animal in the forest of which the flesh is edible, although very often it is not wholesome.

The villagers are not always so lucky. In January 1918, I had occasion to visit the village of Indpura in the Magarda Range of the district of Hoshangabad, and stayed there for a short time with Seth Karam Elshi and my brother, Amir Murtiza.

After a few days, some Ojhas came and started trapping peacocks and other wild fowl. Peacocks sold at that time at about six to eight shillings and fowls at two to three shillings each. I accompanied them to see how it was done and continued to trap on my own after the Ojhas had left.

When this sport palled, we were lying down on our charpoys one evening about 9 o'clock when we again heard the noise of stag and wild dogs. The watering-point in the village was about 100 yards from our hut and it was from there that the noise was coming. My brother remarked that the stag would have entered the water to save itself from the dogs and that when the stag was at the point of death, we would do Halal. With this end in view both of us, in company with two Gonds went to the spot and took up positions on the edge of a ravine and saw that a number of dogs had surrounded the stag which was in deep water. The dogs in small batches tried to swim to the stag, sometimes succeeding and biting it and the stag would kick them ferociously. Other dogs kept guard so that it could not come out of the water and escape into the jungle. After about half an hour some more Gonds from the village arrived with burning bamboos; the dogs took fright and ran away, the stag did likewise and followed them; we were left sitting with the knife in our hands!

There were other tricks to learn besides those of animals. One day on horseback I came to Baspani and stayed there for the night. When I was fast asleep at about 4 o'clock in the morning, a Gond from the village wakened me and said that my horse was missing. We could hear a tiger roaring. We went out in search of the horse with a lantern and found, on going a little way, the horse coming towards us very terrified. We caught it and when we were about to return, the Gond informed me that his cow was also missing. Then I remembered that the Gond is a very mischievous person—he had unloosed the horse so that when we went searching for it I could also search for his cow. I did not oblige, but went back to bed. But not for long—I could hear the tiger quarrelling with a pig

near the water-hole. In the jungle in the vicinity of this village there was a great scarcity of water, and all the beasts used to come to the village watering-point. The pig and tiger came together to quench their thirst. The tiger threw the challenge and the pig accepted, knowing he had almost a tiger's strength. The villagers, who had begun to assemble to see the fun, were of the opinion that as it was nearly daybreak the tiger would soon kill the pig. In these parts it was a general belief that a pig falls asleep as soon as day breaks. This is pure fable. The fact is, that a pig is really weaker than a tiger and in the long run is bound to be defeated. Another explanation is that a tiger when first quarrelling with another animal is very cautious to avoid being wounded, but when it later does get injured it goes nearly berserk with rage and reduces its opponent into fragments in seconds.

In this case the tiger could not get a hold of the pig. It was daybreak and the sun was on the horizon; the whole village was watching the fun from a high place on the bank of the river about 100 yards away. The pig had taken up position against a bamboo grove and the tiger was jumping about in front of it trying to fool it into letting down its guard so that the tiger could get at its neck. The pig was also jumping about and taking pot shots at the tiger, until finally the tiger received a wound and was bleeding. Now there would be a scene worth watching. All the villagers were spellbound. The tiger at last succeeded and, catching hold of the neck of the pig, dragged it out of the bamboo grove and gave it a swing into the air as a cat does with a rat. This went on for about thirty minutes and after a terrific struggle and loud cries the pig became senseless. The tiger then threw it to the ground and took a look around at the assembled audience, who, naturally, were making some noise, but which the tiger had not previously noticed during the drama of its fight. The women, children and men immediately began running fast to the village. Some Gonds and I also ran a little distance—after all, it was a *wounded* tiger—but suddenly we thought we would like to see what

I LEARN ABOUT THE JUNGLE

the tiger would do with the pig and when someone remarked that it was 7 a.m. and the tiger would not remain in the plains in daylight, we did not apprehend any trouble and went back, just in time to see the tiger dragging the pig backwards into the jungle.

Gonds usually steal a tiger's kill if they get the chance, so I suggested to them that the tiger would probably have left its kill just inside the forest and we should go in and bring the dead pig out. The elder men, however, protested, saying that a wounded tiger would stick by its kill, or if it went to drink, would return the moment it heard human voices.

So, with the excitement over, we washed, took breakfast and departed for the village of Kaida.

In this village, an English army lieutenant had arrived for shikar, accompanied by one servant and a tent. He had tied a buffalo calf for a kill and it had been taken. He was now arranging a beat and this was my first experience of an organized beat.

In due course the tiger emerged and the shikari shot it but it sustained merely a fracture of the backbone. On receiving the wound the tiger roared so fiercely that not only did human beings tremble, but the trees too. Birds left their nests and the beaters scrambled for the nearest tree; if the tiger had turned round immediately it is possible it could have attacked the beaters. Instead it roared, tore up the bushes and crushed stones and turned back and ran towards the places the beaters had hastily vacated. A young lad, by the name of Karim, was still on the ground and the tiger made a rush at him, but he managed to climb a tree up to about three feet. The boy was petrified with fear and the tiger roared round and round the tree and tried to jump up but was prevented by its injury. The tiger tore to pieces Karim's shoes and his stick which he had discarded when he ran for the tree and it began to make attempts at jumping. Karim was so terrified that he perspired in streams and urinated. Amir Khan, Karim's father, was on another tree at a distance of about ten yards from Karim and

he also became afraid—afraid that Karim might fall down in his terror, but Amir Khan was an old, experienced man. He came down to about eight feet from the ground on the tree in which he was hiding, and threw his turban towards the tiger, rustling the branches of the tree. His attempts were successful and the tiger rushed to the turban and tore it to pieces. Amir Khan then began shouting to the shikari to come and shoot the tiger; the Gonds also requested the shikari to get down from his machan. The shikari, with remarkable courage, did so, requesting the Gonds to keep stoning the tiger whilst he took proper aim. On hearing the shikari's voice the tiger rushed towards him, but, fortunately, the tiger had lost so much blood that it did not have its former vigour and even its anger had abated so that when a stone came near it, it began to crush it and the shikari was able to shoot it in the neck. The relief of the spectators was indescribable. If the tiger had not been killed, the beaters would have had to spend the night on the trees, because darkness was already falling, with the ever-present danger of falling off from weariness or illness.

I had been placed on a tree in the stopline and it was the first time in my life that I had seen a tiger being killed. I was then only fifteen years of age, and I shall never forget the roar when it was first wounded. I felt as though the clouds had burst, the heavens come down and the earth broken to pieces as if an earthquake had taken place.

Living cheek by jowl with the jungle there is never time to get bored. Only a few days later some coolies reported that nearby, a panther was sitting on a tree below which a pack of wild dogs was keeping vigil. When I protested that by now both the panther and the dogs would be miles away they assured me that the dogs would keep guard, by relays, for weeks on end if necessary. Hearing this, two Gonds and I approached the English shikari and conducted him to the place. We found the panther up a Kahu tree by the side of the river with the dogs below. The Gonds advised the shikari to go near to the tree and shoot the panther, but naturally the shikari was

hesitant. Would the dogs attack him? He was assured by the Gonds that the dogs would run away when they saw him, but even if they did not and he shot the dogs first, the panther would immediately make off. The panther was facing away from the shikari so he shot it over its buttocks and the bullet pierced through its belly, sending it down to earth with a thud. The dogs immediately sprang upon it and the shikari shot one of them, whereupon the rest ran away.

In January 1919 I was deputed to take charge of the saw-mill at Lodhidhana. It was a good place for hunting, being about twenty-four miles from Rahatgaon in the interior of the Hoshangabad district. The saw-mill was on the slopes of a hill half a mile from the village and by the side of a rivulet where, during the summer, wild animals came from long distances to drink. Later, my brother Amir Murtiza came, and he had a 12-bore gun, but by that time my companions and I had devised many ways of having sport without firearms. One of them was catching peacocks. We knew that a peacock became fatigued very soon. I used to post a few men on all the points where the peacock flew for refuge and we would continue to scare it out from one place to the other until it was so tired it was an easy matter to catch it. We also discovered that we could not catch it on a day when the wind was strong, because then the peacock would take a very long flight away from the wicked mortals below. A male peacock with a long tail is more easily caught than the females or young.

We turned our nimble minds to fishing problems too. When the streams dried up and left a few small ponds, we would crush the bark of the Tinsa tree and the fruit from the Kumin tree, throw it into the water, and in a short time the fish would fall into a swoon and rise to the surface of the water, when we would catch them. It was a fascinating moment watching them rise—some would come up topsy-turvy, others in a standing position and some used to hit us with their tails when we tried to catch them.

For cage pets was easy. We would put sandi roots into the ponds and after the birds they would fall down unconscious within three to five minutes. We used to watch the movements of the birds after they took water and when they fell we could come out of our hide and catch them. They only remained unconscious for about half an hour and would then recover. They never died.

Many little dramas were enacted in the forest. I remember one day seeing a crested eagle standing guard on the branch of a bush and inside the bush was a peacock—crying! An eagle will not enter a bush, but waits for its prey to emerge.

It was in this year that I first tried to act the shikari. My brother was away from Lodhidhana along with the '12, when a few Gaolis from the village of Gennu Gawali came, about 1 p.m., to inform us that one of their calves had been mauled by a panther and the panther had the kill at a distance from the village. I got the M.L. gun from the head man of Lodhidhana, emptied the load and reloaded it with six bullets like buckshot and capped it. I went to the village of Gennu Gawali, two miles away, with the Gaolis, very thrilled because it was the first time I had gone after a beast of prey. I had heard from someone that it was no use covering a machan during the night with leaves, so I got up the tree near the kill, after fixing just two sticks fifteen feet up for a platform. I expect the panther was loafing about watching me because I was in the open, making no attempt to take cover, being under the impression that since men cannot see in the darkness, animals cannot either. During the darkness the panther commenced prowling around the tree I was sitting in, and growling. It did not go to the kill but kept scratching the ground and breaking branches. At last, at about 9 o'clock, my enthusiasm had been damped and I called to the villagers who came and took me away, after which the panther went to the kill and finished it off.

While at Lodhidhana, the fever of shikari really entered my blood and there began the many years I was to spend neglecting my work. Sometimes I used to kill two or three stags a day. One blue bull gave me what might be described as "a run for my money". I had gone out one evening with my servant Bahadur, in a bullock cart to shoot a blue bull. We came across some within two miles, and although they were all females, known locally as Rojadi, I fired at one and the ball went through the breast and broke the hind leg. It ran some distance and then sat down. I went up to it, in the bullock cart, and fired twice but the cartridges did not fire. I only had the three with me, so we thought we would catch it alive. When I was within twelve yards of it, the animal rushed at me with open mouth, so, young and foolish, I ran and it ran after me.

Thereupon commenced a game of hide-and-seek. I would run, dive behind a tree and the bull would rush past me; by the time it turned again I was away to another tree. An idea struck me. I ran towards Bahadur, who immediately fled, but I quickly hid behind a tree and the bull, seeing Bahadur running, went after him and soon he was crying for help. I told him to adopt my tactics and take cover behind trees. He did, but it was my tree he came to and I was just about to start beating the bull with a stick when it suddenly sat down. Bahadur wanted me to run away out of sight of the bull because he was terrified and was sure it was an evil spirit which would never leave us alive. Finally I evolved a plan, as darkness was fast approaching and we would have to hurry up. I told Bahadur to make the bull run after him and to draw it towards me when I would break its other leg with my strong stick as it rushed past. Simple! But no one was more surprised than I was when it worked. After it fell down with the second leg broken we stoned it into unconsciousness and then performed the Halal.

When going after deer, one never knows what one might finish up with. Once I shot a porcupine, and its spines ricocheted

into my flesh to a depth of two inches. I had to run helter-skelter with the wounds bleeding as I plucked them out.

It was on a deer excursion that I shot my first tiger (see Preface, page 18), in April 1919, but when later I went with my brother purposely to shoot a tiger which had killed a bullock, we were unsuccessful because we were both completely inexperienced in the erecting of proper machans and the tiger examined us more than we did the animal. When we fell asleep, it came to the kill and the noise of its eating woke us up. In those days, electric torches were not available, and we fired into the darkness. The shot missed, of course, and the tiger ran off.

In June of the same year, I was visiting Chirapatala village. During the night when I was sleeping in the compound, a few Gonds arrived in a terrified condition, woke me up and told me that a man-eater panther had entered the house of Nabbu Khan, and that they had locked it in. Would Karim Patel, the friend whom I was visiting, go to kill it. When I told them that Karim Patel had gone to Harda they wanted me to kill the panther. I had no weapon with me but if they could get a gun from the Begum, I said I would be willing to accompany them. On hearing this the Begum flew into a rage and declared that Jamshed was only a child and she would never allow him to go on such a dangerous mission, especially as one of her servants had lost his life only a few days ago going after this same panther. By this time day was breaking and a big crowd had collected to coax the Begum to give me the gun. She was adamant and wouldn't allow it unless some others made themselves responsible for my life. Three men came forward and assured her they would stand by "little Jamshed", so she gave me a 12-bore with two cartridges—one a ball and the other S.G.

When I reached the house there was another large gathering outside. When they saw me, some were jubilant but others

scoffed at my supposed ability. I went up on the roof and removed some tiles—I remember thinking what a lovely morning it was with the sun just peeping through the trees—but the panther was lying under a platform and could not be hit from above. There was now no alternative but to go into the house. People scattered in all directions, taking refuge, and I entered the house, gun in hand, with two Gonds with spears.

We closed the door behind us. The panther was still there under the platform so I squatted on the ground while the two spearmen stood beside me with their spears at the ready. I could not shoot the animal in the forehead because a wooden stick intervened and I had, therefore, to fire at its chest. As soon as I fired the panther jumped at me, but fell down almost at my feet when I fired the other cartridge, and it died. On examination later, it was found that one of its legs had been wounded at some time by a shikari and it had become weak and emaciated and unable to catch other prey, which is the usual cause of an animal becoming a man-eater.

One day in the winter I was walking in the early morning on foot from Gawasen to Lodhidhana and at the crossing of the Ghandan ghat came face to face with a tiger, not more than ten paces from me. I was unarmed. We stared at each other as though both of us were amazed and after a long number of seconds the tiger turned and ran away. I glorified in that encounter for a long time, boasting, in the way of the young, that tigers were afraid of me. People prophesied that I would come to a tragic end but I am still very much alive after forty-five years of shikari life.

Lodhidhana was right in the depth of the jungle and I had many encounters with wild animals without going very far to seek them. Once I shot a crocodile in the stream, hauled it out and tied its mouth with a piece of rope because my friend and companion, Babu Khan, thought it was still alive. I put it in the bullock cart, covered it with a piece of cloth and sat on it. Very soon it came decidedly to life, heaved me out of the

cart and ran after me with wide open mouth, having broken the rope. I had to take refuge in a tree, but finally, with the help of some villagers, it was again overpowered and tied up and put back into the cart. When I arrived at Lodhidhana with it, the inhabitants were in great fear that it would escape again, and I had to throw it into the river.

When my elder brother brought his family to Lodhidhana, we had to have a milk supply for the babies, so we purchased some goats. We kept them in a hut at the side of the house, but a panther broke in and took one away. After that we kept them in the dwelling-house, but one night when I was quite alone, my brother and his family being away and the servants gone because of the closing down of the saw-mill, another goat was taken by a panther. There was a bamboo compound wall around the house and the door of the house was made of strong bamboo, and there was also a lighted lantern inside, yet the panther broke in as though the protections had been made of paper. I was sleeping only 100 yards away and I ran in clad in my underwear, unarmed, and met the panther in the doorway. We jiggled about from side to side, playing hide-and-seek while I tried to prevent it running off with the goat. When it threw down the goat and ran straight for me I had to let it slip past.

When there was only one goat left, my brother's wife asked me to take it to the saw-mill with me, where I slept, because she had become afraid for the safety of her children. One morning at 4 a.m., at which time I generally got up, I heard a noise at the back door, so, taking up a sword which I saw lying handy, I opened the door to find a panther crouching on the doorstep, but it ran off before I had time to decide what to do with it.

Next we procured a cow with a calf. In the summer-time, my sister-in-law slept in a cot in the open compound. The calf was tied to her cot and a servant boy also slept beside it in the compound. She was awakened by a terrific jerk on the cot and found that a panther had broken the rope and carried off

the calf. The servant was unwilling to get up but finally they called me and I found the panther devouring the calf up a nearby Gular tree. My sister-in-law was a very brave woman, but after that experience she was so afraid of what might happen to the babies that as soon as my brother returned from Berar she insisted that they return to Rahatgaon. Then I was alone altogether, until later on when a cook was sent to me. On a later occasion when out hunting deer, I came upon a panther which I was able to shoot with S.G. and bullets in a .12. I can only hope that it was the same panther.

From larger animals to small ones, but some just as deadly. There were lots of rats at Lodhidhana so I kept a pet cat of which I was very fond. I was sitting on the veranda, one day, with the cat on my lap when all of a sudden the cat leapt to the ground and started scratching at my boots which were lying nearby. I took her up again but she repeated the performance. When this happened three times the Gond servant got alarmed and had a look in the boot and found a very poisonous krait snake in it. I killed the snake with a stick and when the cat found it was dead she lost all interest in it. I repaid the cat with affection, but to my sorrow a panther took her from the back-yard where she was playing, and although I followed her cries the panther eluded me.

Not only does Rahatgaon lie in country as beautiful as a garden, but it is famous for timber and for game-hunting. It is only nine miles from Timarni railway station on the Itarsi-Bombay branch of the Central Railway, yet in the fields around are to be found black bucks in plenty. At the villages of Khamgaon, Chhidgaon and Chhirpura, two to three miles away, spotted deer abound, whilst further on at Badwani, Ambapura and Jhadpa on the mountain slopes, roam tiger and panther. But for sanwal fish, the flesh of which is second to none, you need go no further than the river just in the village itself.

I used to go to the river bank every morning and return with two to three sanwal fish. The usual method is to climb a tree

above the river bank, from which the fish can be seen clearly in the water, and then to shoot them. A companion should be in hiding on the river bank ready to jump in and catch the fish, because it often happens that when the fish is not injured, the explosion makes it senseless for a few minutes when it can be caught alive. If one is alone, it means a lot of running up and down trees to catch the fish immediately after the gun is fired. One particular day, my younger brother, Sikandar, was with me when we heard a disturbance and human voices. A wild boar came rushing down into the river and I shot it just as some men who were pursuing it with dogs came into sight. They were thugs and gypsies, called *kal Belyas*, and notorious thieves. They kill game with dogs and spears. They aggressively demanded the boar and as I wanted to get on with my fishing I gave it to them, but unfortunately they had frightened the fish away. Going home to Rahatgaon on foot an hour later, I came upon a Mahatma, seated upon a deer skin, with very red eyes and long locks of hair. He called me over and pretended to tell me my fortune and said I was very lucky to meet such a pious man as he was. He pressed one of his locks of hair and a few drops of milk fell on my palm; then he pressed another lock and the seed of a rare tree fell into my hand. In return for this "magic" he demanded all the silver I had in my pocket and told me not to look back when I left him. I cursed him roundly and told him I had already given him a boar and if he wanted anything more from me he could have a sound beating from my boot. It was the same man whom I had spoken to from the tree, but he had been unable to see me then. He then became ingratiating and begged my pardon, saying that the only way they could earn a living was by posing as learned Mahatmas.

In 1922 I went to Chicholi, twenty-one miles from Betul, to work the forest of Kutanga, six miles away. In Kutanga was a very well-known shikari by the name of Pirthu Patel. I cultivated his friendship and we would go hunting together.

Because he was very old and his eyesight was failing, old Patel would always ask me to do the shooting and while we sat together on machans, waiting, he would instruct me in all the rules and finer points of shikar. It was with Patel that I first beat for a wounded panther and it is his instructions that I observe and follow to this day.

One day the agent of the Malguzar of Limia told me that near Panda Deo there is a watering-place which is very much frequented by wild animals, so, along with the agent and a Gond shikari from Phoplia, we went there, making a hide close by with leaves. I had with me only a .12 gun belonging to the agent. Soon after we had taken up position the sun set and we heard the cries of deer and I thought that soon they would be at the water-hole. The shikari, however, said they were making this noise because some big animal was in the vicinity and I had hardly digested this piece of information before I saw a tiger coming straight towards us. It was a creature beautiful beyond description, moving with the grace and lightness of something quite ethereal. I was holding the gun and I immediately straightened it, but the agent caught hold of my arm to prevent me firing. The tiger came to the water, sat down, stretched out its front legs and began to drink, making the most fearful noise over it. I again prepared to shoot, but the agent was trembling with fear and the shikari and I had to reassure him. When the tiger lifted its head I shot it in the chest. It was hardly a distance of ten or twelve yards and it roared with a noise like the heavens rending and fell down into the water with a tremendous thud. It continued to roar for some time and I was quite taken aback because its violence eclipsed completely that of the wounded tiger I had seen on the occasion I went with the English shikari. As before, it crushed stones, trees and branches and kept falling down and getting up again. I reloaded the gun with buckshot but the tiger was never still enough for me to fire, until, finally, it attacked a tree, embracing it, and caught it in its mouth, facing towards me. I hit it in the head and it fell quite still.

Until then I had all my attention on the tiger and I found, when looking round, that the agent had fallen into a coma; his dhoti and the ground below him was wet with urine. The shikari was trembling with fear, but he did have his gun ready to fire. When I called him he jumped with fright and his gun went off in the air. When the agent recovered, he asked about the tiger, but in spite of my reassurances he kept shuddering and crying "Tiger, tiger!" and was too weak to walk to the village. The shikari went to fetch a bullock cart to take him home.

On every possible opportunity I would go out shooting peacocks, stags and deer and became expert in shooting both spotted deer and chink deer from bullock carts, and, as the deer became familiar with my system and therefore wary, I would improvise and use every conceivable stratagem to outwit them.

It was in this year, 1922, that I first came face to face with a bear, which ran off after staring at me, and a tiger stood over me so close that it threw its shadow on me and yet ran away; and I think it was incidents like this which gave me the fearless confidence I must have had at that time. The tiger incident occurred one day in summer when I had gone with a companion, Bhola, to a water-hole between Gawadi and Bans Bodi where many stags came to drink during the cover of darkness. There was a cave in a rock on the side of the river where a man could easily get in and sit down. Bhola told me shikaris often used this place. It was a moonlit night and although we heard stags crying by 10 p.m. none had come to the water-hole and I fell asleep. I woke up just as a shadow fell over me in the moonlight, and there, between three and four feet away, was a tiger. I lifted my gun where I lay, prepared to shoot it in the mouth, but with the noise I made it ran away out of sight. This time I was trembling, but nothing like Bhola who was crouched shaking with fear.

Until this time I had never purposely gone after tiger and panther but had encountered them incidentally or accidentally,

but in 1928 I organized my first panther beat which was not successful.

I had gone with Sheikh Nazir, District Ranger, to the village of Mogha to shoot a spotted deer. At about 8 a.m. just when the beat had started with about ten men, a spotted deer came right at me, running at great speed. I shot between the chest and stomach with buckshot, but it ran away. We followed the blood marks and after a while heard it from across a nala. I put my gun down and knife in hand leapt into the nala to perform Halal. And there was a panther grappling with a calf. It made off and by the time I returned with my gun it had disappeared. A beat was accordingly arranged but the beaters carefully avoided the nala where the panther had been. I went back with the beaters to the place where the calf had been killed but the kill had been removed. I asked the men, they were only labourers, to make another search for the panther, but they refused. I learned from this that the beaters should be properly trained and must obey the shikari, and that I should have taken up a position behind some tree near the kill, and got the panther when he came to remove it.

When I killed my next tiger, I had only two men with me. My servant Saddu and another Gond had reported a tiger lying up during the daytime near a place called Chattandeo. I waited behind a big tree while the Gonds went a further 150 yards towards the den in which the tiger was resting. It was midday and it was sheltering from the heat, but the Gonds threw stones at it to drive it out; it merely roared but after the stoning had continued for some time it got really angry and charged straight towards me. The Gonds took cover up trees. The tiger ran straight for about fifty yards and then slowed down to a walk for another thirty yards. It could not stand the heat, its paws being hurt by the hot stones and sand so it took refuge under a tree, glaring at me very fiercely, wanting nothing more than to get back to its den. I was waiting for it to come nearer, but when it halted I thought I had better take the chance. It was at a distance of about sixty yards; I cautiously

took aim, fired at its neck with a .315 rifle and it dropped. I could not see it now because a big rock intervened and the Gonds in the trees kept quiet for some time before asking me if it was dead. After a lengthy pause, with no movement from the direction of the tiger, I directed the men to find trees closer to the tiger and have a good look at it whilst I stood ready, but it was quite dead.

One day, I went to Ghoradongri by train from Betul to see Munshi Wazir Bux. I did not take a bedding roll because I knew he could accommodate me for the night. But when I arrived Munshi was away from home. I decided to go on to Padhar, on foot, a distance of thirteen miles through the dense forest, because I did not want to sample the bed bugs of the local merchant. I left about 5.30 p.m. in spite of warnings from the villagers who pointed out the dark clouds gathered overhead giving every indication of bad weather. But I did not listen to them because I was so used to roaming about in the jungles and playing hide-and-seek with the wild animals.

I had gone about five miles and the rain had started, bringing with it the danger of snakes and scorpions, when I came upon a flock of peacocks with the male dancing, crowing and showing off in front of his admiring audience. I had often seen the mating dance but it never ceased to fascinate me. I sat down on a stone to watch and thought that if only I had had a gun they were mine for the taking. I had with me only an umbrella and a knife, but there also came to me the thought that the Creator did not make such beautiful creatures for men to destroy, and I was glad that I was unarmed. By now the rain was very heavy and as I plodded on there suddenly came towards me a blue bull with three females and a young one. I took cover and as they came closer again the wicked thought came—if only I had a gun! Instead, I sighed loudly and they shot past my tree and disappeared. It had become pitch dark by the time I had gone a little further and all the noises of the jungle appeared to be magnified. Birds were singing, stags and deer crying, muted barks, coughs and scraping rustles came from

all directions, and although I knew the way perfectly, having walked this way so many times, I continually stumbled in the dark over stones and branches. Going up a hill, a bear suddenly loomed up in front of me, silhouetted against the faint paleness of the horizon. I took the knife and my umbrella in my hands and charged, upon which it gave way and made off at top speed.

After the rains when the forest roads were again passable, I would often cycle from Padar to Ghorandongri, unarmed, in the evening with a carbide lamp on the bicycle, and once I had a peculiar experience with a panther. It was heading straight towards me, but was watching the lamp carefully, completely ignoring me. I sounded the bicycle bell to scare it away but it merely slunk down a nala and remained watching the lamp. It came again and I threw the light full on its face. It backed a bit and then we began playing hide-and-seek, and when not coming towards me it would be following at about forty yards distance. I became tired of this game and hit upon a plan. I collected some grass and lighted it, then put out the carbide lamp and made off, pushing the bicycle and shouting loudly. Only when I was convinced that the panther was not following did I light the lamp again, but I had learned something which I was to put to good use in the future. That the use of a lamp over a kill or near the machan did not frighten away the animals in the night-time.

While I was in Padhar, Mir Saheb, who was employed arranging shikar for a Maharaja in the Central Provinces, came to me and asked me to give him a job. He could not get on with the Maharaja and he had heard that I was very enthusiastic about hunting. Although he would take any kind of job, he said he was an experienced clerk but he would also give me tuition in shikar. To demonstrate, he sent for a coconut and a gun, threw the coconut in the air and shot it to pieces. Then he sent for a tin, put it in the river, had himself blindfolded and when he took up position on the bank someone had to sound the tin. He hit it accurately on the first shot and then

sent for a mirror which was propped up reflecting the tin at a distance. He hit the tin whilst looking at it in the mirror, and promised to show me many more tricks later.

I kept him as my writer. After a few days, Mir Saheb asked permission to go back to collect his kit, and whilst he was away I started practising madly to become as competent as he was. At first I simply could not hit a single coconut, but I persevered with grim determination until the ability came. It was the same with the tins and the mirror. When Mir Saheb returned he was anxious to begin my tuition, but when he saw my prowess he was extremely crestfallen, although hiding it under a show of congratulations. Shortly afterwards, Mir Saheb, my brother-in-law Abdur Rashid and I were coming back from Choradongri to Padhar in a bullock cart when we came across a male chink deer. I gave my '315 to Mir Saheb to shoot the animal. He got down from the cart and sat on the ground; we waited and waited but he did nothing. I told him to shoot—it was only 100 yards away; he took aim again but still didn't shoot. As soon as he got up the animal ran away. I was so annoyed with him that I took the gun from him, told him to jump in the cart and we followed the deer until it stopped again at about 200 yards. I took aim from the cart, abusing Mir Saheb all the time, whilst he protested that one needed to be much nearer than 100 yards to shoot, I fired and it fell. Mir Saheb ran and performed the Halal.

After we had reached Padhar and had taken a meal, I fell asleep. Whilst I was asleep Mir Saheb took a taxi and went off with his kit, leaving a message with a neighbour, merely that he had gone. I was very sorry about the whole thing—he had even gone without receiving his pay. I think for the first time in my life I felt a little shamefaced and humble.

Chapter Seven

Becoming a Shikari

DURING the winter of 1930, Mr. R. D. Beohar, the then Sub-Divisional Magistrate of Betul (later Secretary to the Government, Madhya Pradesh, since retired), a big-game enthusiast, asked me to accompany him to the village of Nada, about thirty miles from Betul, to join in a tiger hunt. This place is a famous hunting-ground for tiger and panther, having extensive and very dense forests, and is fully equipped for camping with a Forest Rest House, skilled local shikaris and trained and willing beaters.

Our arrival, most fortunately, coincided with a natural kill a tiger had made about one mile from the camp. The local people and the shikaris welcomed us warmly because they were being constantly troubled by the frequent cattle-lifting activities of these beasts from the Government forests. Under the regulations, they were not allowed to shoot in these forests without a permit from the Forest Department.

We examined the kill and instructed the men to erect two machans and to collect the beaters. Mr. Beohar and I occupied one machan, while we permitted a landlord of a neighbouring village to occupy the other. At first, Mr. Beohar was reluctant to allow this man to take part in the shoot as he had no permit.

With great difficulty I persuaded Mr. Beohar to allow him to sit in the machan and to shoot the tiger if it happened to come in front of his machan, but he was not at all in favour of allowing the landlord to shoot. However, I knew that the

landlord was a vegetarian and accustomed to sedentary work and could not shoot or kill any animal much less a tiger, even if the beast was to stand up right in front of the machan. On my explaining this, he smiled broadly and said nothing more.

After the beating had been going on for some time without a sign of an animal, a big horned sambhar suddenly stood up in front of our machan, not more than twenty-five paces from us. I asked Mr. Beohar to shoot because there was now no hope of getting a tiger or any other big animal. He refused—he wanted to kill a tiger or nothing. As I was very keen to use my new '315, with his permission, I shot the sambhar and in my youthful happiness I got down from the machan at once to cut its throat according to the Muslim religious custom. Whatever Mr. Beohar may have thought, I considered this was as good an end to our day as anything.

I had hardly finished work when suddenly the stoppers began to shout excitedly and urged me to run, run! I turned round and was amazed to see a huge tiger standing at a little distance away. I endeavoured to conceal myself behind a tree but to my horror there was a tigress on the other side crouching also a little distance away, and looking at the sambhar with greedy eyes. I did not falter, but went up to Shri Beohar and asked him to give me my rifle but he refused to hand it over and peremptorily ordered me to get back into the machan. Unfortunately, the tree was a straight one and it was very difficult to climb up it without the ladder, which had been removed previously by the beaters. When I finally succeeded, I asked Shri Beohar to shoot the tiger but he refused because there was both tiger and tigress present and the beaters were very close behind. But I was not prepared to let the animals go and took the liberty of asking Mr. Beohar if I might at least try a shot; as I have said, I was very, very proud of my new rifle. My breathing was not quite steady after climbing the tree, but I fired two shots at the tiger and missed. The tiger ran away but the tigress came forward with a loud roar and

stood up for a second. I fired and it fell down. Before I could fire another shot it got up and quite mysteriously disappeared in the bushes. After examining the spot I found that the tigress had been wounded. As it was already after 5.30 p.m. and becoming dark, we decided to return to camp and find the animal the following morning.

The next day we set out with buffaloes to search out the wounded tigress. When we reached the spot where it had fallen down we divided into two parties. The buffaloes and the beaters took one route whilst the rest of us would take a short cut round to meet them. We had hardly gone many paces when someone shouted out that the tigress was behind us. We took shelter behind trees and stood with rifles ready, but very likely because of the noise we had all been making, the tigress went off in the opposite direction and was not seen again. The buffaloes were recalled and we went back to camp.

I am afraid I did not come out of this shikar very honourably at all but I certainly learned some lessons. Perhaps I had been roaming the jungles, answerable to none for my actions, for too long. I was badly in need of discipline. Fortunately, I did have the ability to recognize my mistakes and learn from them, and this day I added to my store of knowledge, (1) that it is not safe to kill any other animal in the beat for a tiger until the beat has been closed—I should not have killed the sambhar because it is usual for the tiger to follow other animals and is the last one to come, and (2) that I should not have got down from the machan before the beat was over, and (3) that I should never have contemplated shooting from the ground when there were two tigers present.

I was a very hot-headed youth at that time and so keen on shikar that I was fully prepared to walk where angels feared to tread. Later, I was grateful for the restraint put upon me by the senior and much more experienced sportsman, Mr. Beohar.

The next day we received a report of a kill by a tiger near the village of Pat, about three miles from camp. The place where the kill had been made is known as Jamlikoal, a famous tiger

area, in extremely dense Government Forest land, with many natural lairs for the tiger to lie up in.

We reached our machan about 2 p.m. and within twenty minutes of the beat being started, a good-sized tiger was moving towards us. Mr. Beohar had a 12-bore and I had my treasured .315. Both of us were alert and this time determined not to lose our tiger. When the animal was within fifty yards, Mr. Beohar fired and I immediately followed his example. The tiger dropped instantly and to inform the beaters that the animal was dead we fired one more shot each.

To celebrate, we gave a dinner to the beaters in the evening. During this tour, Mr. Beohar shot another three tigers at Nanda and one at Chillor.

In 1931, Mr. J. G. Bourne came as Deputy Commissioner to Betul. When I met him, he told me he had, up till then, shot forty-eight tigers, so I retorted that there were more than that number in this district. Mr. Bourne was a splendid sportsman, a brave shikari, a man who always kept his promises and as regal as the Moghul kings. He commenced his shikar in the districts of Khurchana, Panchi Tokra and Gawasen. He did not take me with him, and after eight days he returned without a single tiger. He sent for me and accused me of killing them out and, annoyed, I replied that there were plenty of them, it was he who couldn't find them. Naturally, he told me to find one, then, so I asked him to fix up a dozen baits well in advance and we would go to Nanda. Mr. Kerawala, who was a District Magistrate (later Commissioner), came with us. Mr. Bourne had ordered that at least 150 to 200 men should always be in camp to arrange a beat and I was directed to supply stag meat for their food. During the evenings in camp, the Gonds would perform their national dances and they were rewarded with free drinks.

When we came to a place called Khamapur, we were told there had been a kill at Jamlikoal, so machans and beats were at once arranged. Mr. Bourne warned me that I was not to kill a tiger, so I took only a .22 with me. Mr. Kerawala had never

seen a live tiger before and was most anxious to do so, so he asked me to seat him at a place where the tiger was sure to pass. I put him in a machan quite close to Mr. Bourne's one, but told him that he would have to work as a stopper and must clap if the tiger came towards him, to turn it to Mr. Bourne's machan. Mr. Kerawala was at the end of the stopline on Mr. Bourne's right and I was sitting on the stopline, on the ground at the left. In a very short time the tiger appeared and went towards Mr. Kerawala, who obediently clapped and it turned towards Mr. Bourne, who killed it with his first shot. Then he started whistling, which, in the shikar code meant he needed help. When I offered to come forward he told me to be still and keep quiet. After the beaters had arrived, I asked him why he had whistled and he replied that as he had shot a tigress he expected the cubs to follow and the whistle was for the beaters to carry on with the beat. I was astounded; I had never seen a tiger which looked more like a male than this one and when we examined it, it certainly was. Mr. Bourne too seemed surprised because he said that the pug marks at the kill resembled those of a tigress and cubs. This was where Jamshed could trot out his jungle lore and I said they were the marks of a tiger and a panther, and explained to him the differences.

The tiger was brought to camp and measured up to 9 feet 9 inches long and was well built. I had to skin it because there was no one else there with any experience of this job and I was surprised to find three balls from M.L. guns in the animal—one ball in its right leg, one in its neck and another through its intestines, which had joined up again. Mr. Bourne's reaction was unexpected—he told Mr. Kerawala that too many licences were being issued for M.L. guns and to reduce their number. Later, he cancelled hundreds of them.

We moved camp to Mohda and the Gonds came early next morning to report a kill. After examining it I told Mr. Bourne that it was the kill of a panther. To satisfy his disbelief I arranged to beat it out. Two machans were erected for Mr. Bourne and Mr. Kerawala and I sat on the stopline. About midday

I felt very sleepy so I told a Gond sitting on the tree nearest to me to wake me up on sighting the animal and I went to sleep. While the stoppers were still arranging themselves the panther came up to the right side of the stopline, and apparently, when the stoppers clapped it away it came galloping to my side. I became alert the moment I heard its footsteps but lay rooted to the ground whilst the panther took a great leap over me and approached Mr. Kerawala's machan. Mr. Kerawala fired twice but both were misses; then Mr. Bourne fired and missed also. This did nothing to improve the temper of Mr. Bourne when later he heard that the panther had leapt over me and I had to receive my due chastisement for allowing such a thing to happen. Another lesson was stowed away in the recesses of my mind—never depend upon anyone but yourself and be prepared all the time for the animal to come.

We then camped at Chillor. It was a fine, but bitingly cold morning in January and when out driving, in two cars, Mr. Bourne and Mr. Kerawala in the first and the camp tahsildar and I in the second, near Basinda, we came upon five tigers in a nulla on open ground near the fields. Mr. Bourne loaded his rifle but did not shoot and when I asked him why, he said they had started moving. Fortunately, he did not hear the driver and the peon remarking that the D.C. was afraid to shoot when he saw five tigers standing in front of him. Mr. Bourne wanted a beat to be arranged, but the Gonds said it was impossible in unseen jungle with which they were not familiar but when he appealed to me I promised to arrange it. I sent him back to camp whilst I got everything fixed up. With an outflanking movement we went round the jungle and set up two machans at a nala—I had it all mapped out in my mind.

As usual, Mr. Bourne and Mr. Kerawala went up into the machans and I stood on the stopline where I expected the tigers to cross. In due course, the beaters succeeded in heading the tigers towards Mr. Bourne's machan and I kept standing under cover of a tree with my '22. Mr. Bourne shot the first tiger when it was as close as fifteen yards; it dropped and the

tigers behind stood still, but when the noise of the beaters getting closer increased they came forward again. Another tiger was shot at about the same distance, and fell, but just then one of the peons shouted out to the beaters to run as the tiger was only wounded and the beaters went up the trees like monkeys. The three remaining tigers turned about and ran away, the stoppers making no effort to prevent them, as they also appeared to be terrified. I wanted to yell at them that the tiger was dead, but this would have only driven the other three further away, so I kept my fury in control. Mr. Bourne was very upset over the affair and asked me what we should do now. There was nothing we could do then, but I assured him that the tigers would return in the night in quest of their two dead companions and we should put up a bait and have another beat tomorrow. Mr. Bourne was very dubious, asserting they would definitely not return after seeing the two killed, but I told him that not only would they return but they would roar at the top of their voices for the whole night and terrify all the villagers in the neighbourhood.

Which is exactly what did happen. Moreover, they killed the bait. I examined the pug marks and went round the jungle to make sure they had not left it, which they hadn't, and I knew they would be lying in a nala. I fixed up the machans in the direction the tigers had taken the previous day and directed that the beaters would light a fire every hundred yards to assure the tigers that all the danger was behind them and they would proceed straight ahead. In front of Mr. Bourne's machan was a small hillock where a stopper was sitting over a tree. When he saw the tigers coming he became nervous, and thought that as he was only about twelve feet up the tree he had better go higher. The tigers saw him and started roaring all at once, the noise of which seemed to rock the very earth. Their distance was too great for a shot and finally they went beyond range altogether.

In the month of March 1932, the then Governor came

to Banjaridhal for shikar, and Mr. Bourne made very elaborate arrangements for his reception. The camp was laid out like a garden, roads made and even shops opened in the camp and much festivity arranged. For two months previously baits had been tied up so as to tame the tigers. One of the tigers had consumed twenty-two calves on the bank of the River Tawa. A bait had been tied every second day and the tiger by the Tawa River had grown fat and lazy.

On the day the Governor arrived, two kills were reported and it was decided to have a beat near Guwadi. Ignoring my presence, Mr. Bourne directed the Malguzar and the residents of Guwadi to fix the machan and arrange the beat. I went to him but he told me not to meddle in his affairs, but let the residents of Guwadi do the needful as he understood that I did not know this particular forest. When the machans were fixed I told Mr. Beohar, who was there also, that the tiger would definitely not go that way and pointed out to him the direction I knew it would follow. The machans had been tied in an open piece of ground, which the tiger avoids. Mr. Beohar was by now becoming very jumpy because my estimated route for the tiger passed the very spot we were standing on. We were fully armed and I assured Mr. Beohar that the tiger would not attack us unless it was injured, nevertheless we took cover and shortly after the beat started, his majesty the tiger stalked past us at about 100 yards—it was a beautiful animal. When it had gone, we came out of cover and joined up with the beaters going towards the machan and conveyed the bad news to the Governor.

News of two more kills was brought the next morning, but my services were again rejected. Mr. Bourne would not even speak to me—no doubt his pride was hurt the previous day—and I was not told where the kill was, so I fell in with the beaters and discovered that the machans were again in open ground. It transpired that the people of the village did not want the Governor to suffer the discomfort of trudging through rough country and they decided that the tiger should

go to the Governor. Unfortunately, they forgot to acquaint the tiger with the idea and it didn't play. The day ended the same as the previous one. In disgust, the Governor moved his camp off to Bori, in the district of Hoskangabad, early the following morning and after he had gone news came of a kill by a tiger on the bank of the Tawa River. Mr. Bourne sent for me; he had assembled all the villagers who had made the arrangements for the Governor's shikar and he asked the local headman why it was that they could not produce a tiger for the Governor. I butted in with the information that it was Mr. Bourne's own fault because he did not allow me to fix up the machans and the beats. I waxed eloquent—here was an experienced shikari like Jamshed on the spot and Bourne insulted him by trusting illiterate Gonds and the village headman, who knew nothing about shikar, with the job; result?—no tiger. Considerably enraged with my impertinence, Mr. Bourne demanded if I could bring out a tiger. "Yes," I told Mr. Bourne, "and you can shoot me if I don't."

A letter was sent post haste to the Governor asking him to return and I was given a free hand. Now what? I had abused the Gonds in front of the Deputy Commissioner and now I had to rely on them to carry out my arrangements. I was indeed in a fix. Then I remembered my friend Mahmud Khan, who was a forest ranger, and who, although an experienced shikari, had also been kept out of the previous arrangements. We took out a map of the forest and roamed the jungle with it in our hands, decided where the tiger was lying up and where he would emerge in the beat. When we were on our way to erect the machan we came upon Mr. Bourne with some Gond shikaris, who were telling him that there would be no tiger because the forest ranger had been seen in the forest driving it away. Mr. Bourne turned on Mahmud Khan so angrily that the ranger could only reply that Jamshed had taken him into the forest; I tried to soothe Mr. Bourne down, asking what did it matter how we did it, so long as I brought out a tiger for the Governor. The Governor, said Mr. Bourne,

was not coming—there was news of two kills near his new camp and he wanted to remain there. But I still felt bound to produce that tiger as I had promised, so I erected two machans, one for Mr. Bourne and the other for Mr. Beohar. I was afraid that the Gonds might try to drive the tiger away out of ill-feeling for me, so I put the ranger in charge of the beat and with every Gond shikari on the stopline I placed a Tahsil peon and a forest guard to keep the Gonds out of mischief. I decided to walk the tiger down to the machan myself. There were about 150 men in the beat and it started off with a great flourish of drums. In spite of all the noise the tiger sat tight and suddenly I wondered if the Gonds had succeeded in driving it away before the beat started. I would certainly be a laughing-stock and Mr. Bourne could quite easily cause a lot of trouble for me. When the monkeys and birds suddenly started making a noise, my heart was filled with joy—I knew the tiger was about to break. When the beaters were 150 to 200 yards away I spotted the tiger. I had never seen such a huge one before—it was the same tiger that had devoured the twenty-two baits and it was so fat that its belly was only about four inches off the ground. Usually a tiger travels about twenty to twenty-five miles a night in search of food, but this one had not had to move a foot for the last two months. It paced slowly, majestically forward, lethargy showing in every movement. I followed closely behind as zealously as a mother with a toddling infant. It went a few more paces forward and then sat down under a tree but when the beaters got nearer it got up again and looked round for a means of escape. At one particular spot I thought it might slip past the beaters and stoppers, especially if they had a notion to allow it to do so; I went and stood there, the tiger came near me and sat down again. It was 150 yards from the machan and about eighty from me. It looked back at the beaters, then at me; the beaters came on and I clapped, but the indolent creature just sat there. I stepped forward and threw a stone at it, whereupon it staggered to its feet and roared with wide-open, tongue-lolling mouth. I called out, "Go ahead,

sonny, your father is waiting," and with a bad-tempered roar it got going straight towards the machan. I immediately took cover, for I knew if it got wounded exactly who it would take a dislike to. Mr. Bourne fired at sixty yards, but missed and with the tiger still running forward he tried and again and again missed. A third shot after it also went wide and I was filled with a wicked happiness. When it had disappeared I saw the ranger coming towards me and I went to meet him; we shook hands, grinning broadly. I am sure Mr. Bourne was now wishing he had got Jamshed to arrange things for the Governor, especially after the large expenditure he had made on the abortive shikar.

Pride often goes before a fall, and one of the few injuries I have received at the hands of animals was caused by, of all things, a stork. I was out shooting black buck with my brother Murtaza at Gajpur. We had shot one and then saw a stork in a field. I asked my brother why the stork was alone because storks are always in pairs or flocks. My brother told me that some cruel person, like Jamshed, for instance, had probably shot its companion and the stork was very unhappy. He wanted me to shoot it to end its sorrow. I shot it with an S.G. which broke its leg and passed on through its stomach. The stork flew for about 200 yards and then fell to the ground with outstretched wings. I dared not go near its long, sharp beak so I looked around for a stick or a stone to stun it, but there was nothing to hand. I caught hold of its neck by jumping on it from behind, pressing my feet on to both wings, and took out my knife for the Halal. Suddenly it unloosed its unbroken foot and kicked me so hard in the face that its toe-nail ripped into my lip and stayed hanging on there like a giant fish-hook. I threw down the knife and caught its leg, but I could neither stand nor sit down, nor could I even cry because the nail was like a bit in my mouth. My brother came strolling up wondering what funny kind of Halal I was performing. He had to do the ceremony himself, lying on his back on the ground while

the stork swung from my lip, and then unfasten the nail. To stop the bleeding I bandaged it by placing fat from the stork over the wound. With this treatment the wound healed in four days. Any wound from a knife or sword could be similarly treated provided it is not allowed to get wet and that there is a newly killed animal available, and, of course, that the bone has not been broken.

I killed another panther just before the summer season of 1932 came to an end. Then it started raining and the countryside became green and the water-holes and nalas were filled to overflowing. The animals no longer needed to search for water, it was all around. By August, malaria was rampant and I too succumbed. I decided to cure it by fasting and climbing to a high mountain top. Exercise and fast are two of nature's remedies for malaria.

I left the hut about 5 a.m. and in light rain showers with only a shirt and shorts reached the mountain by 7 a.m. It was a mile climb to the peak, and when I reached the top I was perspiring profusely; I was also very tired, but I felt as though I had been washed clean by the rain and the sweating. I roamed around the top, looking at the view of the tiny villages below, and then went to a big stone to rest. I sat for an hour resting, looking at the scenery, listening to the cries of peacocks and other birds, the long leaves of the sagon tree like an umbrella over me giving protection from the drizzle. The cattle walking and grazing below looked like ants and the smoke rising from the village ovens drifted this way and that like miniature clouds. Then there penetrated the sounds of animals quarrelling together. Could it be tiger or panther? I listened and soon decided that it was tiger, that they were under a rock quite close to me and that they were not quarrelling but love-making. I took off my shoes and went nearer—the entrance to the cave was facing away from me and I dared not go round to look in. It is well known that when tigers or any other animals are copulating they do not want any interference and if they get it they will fly into a frightful temper and destroy everything within

range. I did not want to be destroyed on this high hill where no one would ever find me to perform the last rites. I had my gun with me, so I thought that if I threw a stone the couple might come out, go a little way, then look back when I could shoot them. I collected some stones and lay down over the rock; I threw one stone and then another and got ready to face them. The animals ran out of the cave as expected, went about twenty-five yards and then looked back. But they were not tigers, they were panthers. I shot the male on the neck and it died then and there; the female ran away. I waited a long time for its return but it didn't come, so I went to the dead panther and covered it with big sagon leaves to protect the skin. I got down the steep hill with difficulty and felt extremely hungry and having five miles to go to my house I was tempted to start eating myrabolam leaves. Instead, I dug up some edible roots and ate them. Beside a mango tree at a well just off the road I lay down, started to sing and fell fast asleep. When I woke up it was 2 p.m. with rain clouds massing. Fighting with hunger and my resolution to fast, I set off again but came upon a barking deer which I shot, cleaned it and slung it across my shoulders and set off once more. I went to Dolidhana village and told Dasan Gond, a shikari, to bring in the dead panther. Dasan and I had several times visited this jungle hill and I knew he would find the panther easily. I reached Padhar at 6 p.m., smelling and perspiring. I took a hot bath and two tablets of quinine, with tea, and slept. I sweated, woke up and rubbed my body briskly with a towel. By that time the deer was well cooked. I had a hearty meal and slept again all night. In the morning I arose early, massaged my body with the fat of tiger mixed with sweet oil, had another hot bath, exercised and took some ginger tea. I usually had cold baths, but according to jungle custom I took a hot bath then because I was suffering from fever. By evening I was completely cured.

Just before Christmas, 1932, I received word from Mr. Bourne that he wanted to celebrate Christmas by shooting five tigers during the holidays and he wanted me to take him

to a place where I could produce them. I immediately suggested that we should go to Nanda where a lot of tigers were available, and that if he would send the tahsildar (revenue officer) to me with funds, I would purchase baits so that the tigers could be tamed beforehand. Mr. Bourne promised to send him on December 17th, to Nanda, but on December 17th I went to see Mr. Bourne in Betul. He was annoyed to see me there, but I assured him that I was going to Nanda straightaway. While we were talking, Mr. Kerawala arrived, and shortly after him came a telegram for Mr. Bourne. There was a tiger kill at Ranipur. Mr. Bourne decided to go right away and I offered to go with him, but in spite of Mr. Kerawala's support of me, Mr. Bourne ordered me to go to Nanda. Well, man proposes, but God disposes. The events were related to me later.

Mr. Bourne reached a place two miles from Ranipur where all the arrangements had been made for the shikar by the Revenue and Police Inspector. Two machans were erected in one of which sat Mr. Bourne and in the other the tahsildar. The beat started, the tiger arrived and Mr. Bourne shot it in the shoulder joint with a .577, which was almost as effective as a small cannon. The tiger fell but got up and ran off. Mr. Bourne got down from the machan and, as, unfortunately, he was in the habit of doing, went off in search of it at once. Seventeen men with guns went with him—five of them had 12-bore rifles and the rest had muzzle loaders. A Kotwar shikari went ahead examining the blood marks, and soon reported that the animal was not far ahead, although a tiger can run very fast on three legs. The Kotwar shikari was the first to see the wounded tiger and he called out to Mr. Bourne to look, at the same time signing with his hands. As soon as the tiger heard the Kotwar's voice it was on him like a flash of lightning and caught hold of the man's neck with its mouth. Mr. Bourne was only ten paces away and he shot it in the stomach. The tiger fell from the Kotwar, but only momentarily was it down, and in another few seconds had sprung

upon the Deputy Commissioner, who fired again as it leapt, but missed. Now Mr. Bourne's ammunition was finished and the cartridges were with the peon who had already taken to his heels. With admirable presence of mind and courage, Mr. Bourne jammed the barrel of his rifle into the animal's mouth, but it grabbed it and threw it away, and as it turned again to its victim Mr. Bourne thrust his left hand inside the tiger's mouth. The tiger stood up on its hind legs and put its uninjured leg on Mr. Bourne's shoulder and a terrible struggle ensued. The District Commissioner was a well-built and very brave man and a very strong one, but he could never hold his own against a wounded tiger. He was shouting agonizingly for a gun and cartridges and imploring someone to shoot the tiger, but everyone was too concerned about his own safety and in their haste to get up the trees had left their guns on the ground below. The tahsildar was in his machan and the Police Inspector, the village headman and the Gond shikaris were up as high as they could go and several of them had soiled pants to show for their terror. The District Commissioner was now on the ground, but still fighting gamely, kicking with all his might at the tiger's mouth—it was vital to prevent the tiger catching hold with its mouth. The duel went on for nearly twenty minutes and Mr. Bourne was very severely ripped and gashed, when suddenly the tiger's strength departed because of the extent of its wounds. It fell down beside Mr. Bourne. The men on the tree-tops came down and picking up their rifles fired a few more shots into the tiger and then carried Mr. Bourne to his car and took him to the hospital at Betul. Mr. Bourne was still conscious and directed that the operating theatre be opened up and doctors and nurses sent for immediately, but in spite of all the medical aid given him he died three days later. He had really given his life for the Kotwar, because he might so easily have taken cover when the man was attacked. He was greatly mourned in the district, because in spite of his brusque manner, of which I had had experience, he was extremely kind and generous to the poor of the district

and used to provide them with unlimited amounts of game as well as other commodities, and, in addition, he was courageous, fair-minded and really cared about the conditions of the people under his supervision.

The news came to me by special messenger, at Padhar, to cancel my arrangements for Nanda. I went at once to Betul and insisted on seeing him, but he was in a coma and I could only leave him. I was stunned, and wished I could have been at the side of this heroic Englishman; I am sure I could have done something to protect him. Had Mr. Bourne been alive for even another year, the town of Betul would have been different today. He had promised that industries would be started without delay to root out the prevalent poverty of the district. It was a long time before I went on shikar again, my sorrow, and my disgust with the Gonds, was so great. From my own experiences I know that these men scramble up the trees the moment the shot is fired. They go up like monkeys and if you happen to be going up the tree, they will drag you back so that they can get up first.

Time, however, is a healer and memory is quickly replaced by new experiences when one is young. Moreover, shikar was in my blood, it was me, and I could not imagine my life without it. Looking back to between 1933 and 1936, I can recollect easily the tiger I killed at Guwadi which had been killing the village buffaloes; and the one at Ghisi Bagla, where I had a contract adjoining the Government Forest, twenty-five miles from Betul, in 1935; and a panther in the same district in the same year; a crocodile and many stags, deer and peacocks.

In 1936 the Principal of Tibbia College, Lahore, namely, Shefa-ul-Mulk Hakim Mohammad Hasan Qarshi, came for shikar and I took him to Tara where we had a very successful bag of stags and deer. One day when we were beating for a stag, we were accompanied by my brother-in-law, my young brother Hamza and his young son Riaz, and my agent, Afzal. My brother-in-law was not a sportsman and he had only newly learned to handle a gun, Afzal had only a 12-bore with

him and, of course, Riaz was a child, so when I heard tigers quarrelling not very far away, and in the direction where my family were seated upon a large rock, I moved over to them in case the tigers should break cover. It was a day of wind and rain and I was wearing a raincoat which is not the best of garments for climbing trees. Just after the beat started I saw a panther staring straight at me. I was so amazed that I lost the precious moment and before I could fire it galloped into the bushes. It had gone towards the beaters, so no doubt they would quickly beat it out again. I heard Hakim Saheb's gun fire on the left and saw a male panther running towards the beaters. I fired at it and it fell dead. Riaz was very excited and he ran towards the panther and, while we were restraining him, I heard Afzal's gun fire from the right. I took it for granted that Afzal must have shot the panther that I had missed and I tensed myself for action if he should have only wounded it with his 12-bore, when, my eyes popping out of my head with so much unexpected activity in the animal world, a huge boar came charging towards me. I positioned my gun and shot it as it ran past galloping. The ball pierced its stomach and chest, slantwise, but it continued at high speed with its intestines trailing. The beaters were proceeding all this time and as I expected more animals to come out now, I did not fire at the boar again but went back to my family to find Riaz dancing on top of the dead panther. When Afzal arrived, he said he had shot a spotted deer and when I told him about the boar we decided to arrange another beat. Just then a Gond came running to say a wounded panther had injured two men and I must go immediately to dispose of it. He further told me that it was Afzal who had shot the panther and not a deer as he had said. When Afzal heard this he threw down his gun and ran up a tree. I would have to deal with him later, meantime there was the wounded panther to settle. When I arrived at the place everything was quiet and the men did not answer my shouts, which puzzled me until I saw one of them up a tree pointing. I went in the direction but the grass was very tall and it was

only with difficulty that I spotted the panther; it was at the foot of a very thin tree trying very hard to climb up after the man who was at the top. I shot and killed it right away. The man told me that he had been in some bamboos which the panther pulled down and razed to the ground. The animal caught the man's knee as he was thrown down but the panther was mixed up in the bamboo and the man fell beyond its further reach so he had shinned up the nearest tree which was the thin one—this was his salvation, the tree was too thin for the panther to get up. The man was badly shaken and it took a month for his injured knee and thigh to recover. The second man had had his foot torn with the panther's claw as he was mounting the tree but he was only slightly injured.

Then we resumed the recovery of the boar. A Gond had spotted it and I shot it again, but it once more ran off. My cartridges were finished so I sent my brother Hamza after it with his L.G. He shot it but the boar commenced to charge, oblivious of its wounds, so Hamza took protection in a tree and he had to fire twice more before the boar appeared to succumb. But it was still breathing, so I told one of the Gonds to fell it with an axe; the axe jumped off as though it had struck a piece of rubber and the boar stood up and ran like lightning; the men ran like lightning too, in the opposite direction, and it was left to Hamza to fire still another shot to finish it off.

In May 1936, in extremely hot weather, Mr. R. J. Hill, the new Deputy Commissioner, Betul, and the Resident Engineer, Captain Reed, accompanied by Mrs. Reed, came for shikar to Kantabadi, and shot a good number of fine stags and deer. One morning there came word of a kill nearby in Chunkhed—it was well-known tiger country and it is so laid out that if you put a machan in a certain place the tiger is bound to come that way after it has made a kill. We arranged the beat to start immediately after lunch. The heat was intense—even the stones were hot and the leafless trees gave no shade; the air shimmered with the warmth. We had a long way to

walk and a steep hill to climb. Poor Mrs. Reed was obviously exhausted, she kept searching the trees for the shade which was not there and continuously drinking water; she would stop at the foot of a tree and sigh loudly. Some other officers who accompanied us were in an even worse condition than Mrs. Reed, and they said that if they had known what they were undertaking they would have pleaded illness, to get out of it. Eventually we reached the spot and the D.C. told me to see that Captain Reed's machan was well placed because he wanted the Captain to shoot the tiger. I erected it near a nala where I was sure the tiger would emerge; it was sixteen feet from the ground, but Captain Reed remarked that it was too high and wanted it lowered to twelve feet. I warned him that the tiger would pass right underneath the machan and pointed out that he had Mrs. Reed to consider, but he was adamant, so lowered it was. Mr. Hill's machan was erected on a nearby hillock, and as Mr. Hill wanted me to be near the Captain, I took up position on the ground, near a tree beside the machan. I also erected another machan near me, on a tree, for Mr. Sarwate, the ranger, Mr. Navlaiker, the tahsildar, and a contractor named Deokinandan Jalswal. I instructed them to keep quiet and merely watch the fun.

As the sun began to set I left my place and went near the bank of the nala and sat at an elevation looking down into it. I had had an early morning start, it was a hot day and there had been a long walk and heavy climb, all good excuses, but I am still ashamed to say that I dozed off. I was aroused by the sound of gunshots and the furious roar of a tiger and, springing to my feet, I saw a tiger standing beside the machan on its hind legs, looking at Captain and Mrs. Reed over the edge and preparing to take a leap up. Within a second I fired my .315 but in my haste hit it in the chest instead of at a more vital spot. The tiger fell down and immediately took to its heels; I streaked alongside it and fired another shot. By now I was in the nala and a third round hit it again in the chest. Captain Reed also fired four rounds only one of which hit the tiger on the back,

and Mr. Hill fired and hit it also in the chest, but none of these shots were mortal ones and it soon vanished in long grass where it was dangerous to follow it. Now the beaters arrived and Captain Reed came down from the machan. I asked him where the tiger was when he first fired and he said it had passed under the machan and he hit it on the front paw and it was then it had stood up on its hind legs.

The following morning we collected twenty-five cow-buffaloes. Mr. Hill, Captain Reed (but not Mrs. Reed), myself and about a dozen Gond shikaris all went out to look for the wounded tiger. Some of the buffaloes, experienced in this work, sniffed at the blood of the tiger and set off; we followed and had only gone about 150 yards when an uproar commenced. The Gond shikaris, as usual, were up trees like greased lightning, throwing away their guns at the bottom of the trees so that they would not be impeded, and the two European officers went helter-skelter too. I told them to take cover behind big trees and they would be quite safe, running would only attract the animal to them. When I had gone on a little farther I saw that the buffs were surrounding the tiger and attacking it with their horns, crying and bellowing like thunder, the whole jungle echoing from end to end. A battle of giants can be a very terrifying spectacle. I peeped in between the legs of the buffs and saw that the tiger was now lying on its back with its legs in the air, and I knew it was dead. Quickly, I drove the buffs off with a stick to prevent them spoiling the skin and then called to the others to come.

The D.C. was extremely annoyed with the Gonds and spoke to them very severely, calling them cowards, blaming them for the death of Mr. Bourne, and also for that of an English captain who had been killed by a tiger near Kanji a few months after Mr. Bourne. Sukkan, a well-known shikari from Kantabadi, had been with him, and when the tiger attacked the captain, Sukkan threw down his gun and climbed into a tree in a bamboo grove. Strangely enough, the bamboo became uprooted and Sukkan fell down, but a limb from the tree

struck the tiger across the back and it dropped the captain and ran off, but too late to save the captain's life.

In May 1938, I killed my second man-eater panther. Mr. Hill and a Mr. Hewetson, Deputy Forest Conservator, had news of a man-eating panther terrorizing the villages of Dabri and Panchi Tokra, fifty miles from Betul. Altogether it had carried off seventeen men, women and children, and several young men who had attempted to catch it had very narrow escapes.

The three of us went to Panchi and on arrival were told that only the night before a panther had taken away a child. I went to the house concerned and found the mother weeping. She told me that she had closely locked the doors of the house and lighted a lamp, but about 4 o'clock in the morning she had to take the child outside the house to ease himself and she was just bringing him in when the panther leapt and snatched the child from her arms. She only heard the child scream and then they had vanished. The mother raised a hue-and-cry and the villagers collected to make a search. During the morning they searched again without success. She implored me to kill the panther, and sobbed and sobbed—he was her only child. I was near to tears myself at her grief and I promised her I would not leave the village until the panther was dead.

The villagers had made a big platform about sixteen feet high and when darkness fell they all went up there to sleep—men, women and children, leaving their belongings to the mercy of God. Some of the old and sick had great difficulty in getting on to the platform and none of them would be able to leave it in the night to answer the calls of nature.

I decided to stay in the house from where the panther had made its latest kill on the expectation that it might return. The house was rather secluded, away from the other houses, and I settled down on the veranda for the night. I kept my head towards the wall and my feet towards the veranda rail. The roof was very low over me. I had two loaded guns on each

side of my bed and a big knife in the bed. I wound a turban round my neck because it is the vital part which the panther would make for. I dozed and woke alternately all night but the panther did not come and when I went to the D.C. I found that he and the D.F.C. had just returned from Pat Forest village where the panther had gone the previous night, but it had been scared away by the villagers. And then came news that the panther had tried to get into a house in the village of Dabri. While it was breaking open the bamboo matting, the occupants had wakened up, and lighted a fire, but in spite of it the panther came inside, whereupon a Gond struck it on the head with a burning log and it ran away. The D.C. told me to go there and I went along with my agent, Afzal. We found on arriving that whilst running away the panther had killed a calf. So Afzal and I sat on each side of the kill at the footpath which the panther would follow. The villagers were instructed to sit on open ground at a distance of half a mile and to come as soon as they heard gunshot.

When the sun was about to set we heard a barking deer at a distance of about three furlongs, and then again at a nearer distance. Then Afzal spotted the panther coming along with a regal gait quite unaware of the fate awaiting it. When it was about thirty yards away, it got wind of us and sat down on its buttocks looking at us. I immediately shot it at the joint of its shoulder and neck and the panther lay down with its front legs together as if praying to God to pardon it for the atrocities it had committed. When I examined it I found it had only one tooth and was old, which is why it attacked humans. They are easily caught and their flesh is tender.

It was established that I had killed the right animal because the people injured had been bitten with one tooth, but I stayed for two days to be satisfied.

Soon after our return to Betul, the rains started and that season for sport came to an end.

In May 1940, Raja Saheb Shri Krishna Dutt Dube, Raja

of Jaunpur, came to Betul for shikar and brought with him a Sikh shikari. I took him to Kantabadi, about thirty miles from Betul, where the Forest Department have built a very beautiful Rest House on a hillock beside the Machna River. The villagers, mostly aborigines, have been trained in the art of beating the forest for shikar, since childhood. Raja Jaunpur was a jolly old shikari having to his credit many a bag of tigers. He was a lusty man of about fifty years of age, stout, about six feet tall and weighing about 280 pounds and very strong, but did not have the staying power necessary for this kind of sport. Firstly because he was of royal blood and not accustomed to walking long distances and secondly because he was getting too old for the sport of shikar, but he was a very good shot and had lots of courage. He preferred sitting on the ground rather than going up into a machan.

On the first day we were at Kantabadi we had news of a kill at Kadangipani, nearly four miles away. The tiger had not taken away the kill so we decided to put up a machan over the kill and sit there for the night. With the Raja, Diwan Bahadur Bhagwati Charan Dube, a retired Chief Engineer of the Public Works Department, Madhya Pradesh, also mounted the machan. About 8.30 p.m. the tiger visited the kill, the Raja shot the tiger in the neck with his .500 and simultaneously the Diwan Bahadur also fired and hit the tiger on its chest, so the first day passed off satisfactorily. On the third day, news was received of another kill about two miles away, at the juncture of the Sher Nala and the Khokra Nala, and it too had been left on the locus. Looking at the pug marks it was found that the tiger had gone a very long way from the kill so it was again decided that a night-long vigil over the kill was necessary. The Raja instructed me to make all the arrangements for the machan and he would come at 5 p.m. I did not take my rifle with me because I did not intend staying there; the preparations for staying the night in a machan were not to my taste—I would require special clothing to blend with the landscape and as the mosquitoes were extremely active at that time it

would mean caps, scarves, gloves and much self-control not to start slapping about at them, so as soon as I had seated the Raja I meant to go back to camp.

The Raja mounted the machan along with the Sikh shikari about 6 p.m. and I asked leave to retire, but the Raja insisted on me remaining. It is not advisable for a third man to sit in a machan and in any case the Raja had turned his machan almost into a shop. He had a big cane easy chair, a pillow, water-bottle, pan (betel) box and other luxuries, as well as a big battery and a first-aid box. I told him I had neither gun nor suitable clothing but he waived this aside, and gave me some of his surplus clothing and a 12-bore gun with one old cartridge the cap of which was rusty. He promised we wouldn't sit longer than till 9 o'clock.

I loaded the 12-bore with the ball and the other barrel with S.G. shot and sat down on his left, the Sikh was on the right of his chair. Before the sun had even set I saw the most beautiful tiger advancing from a distance, the sun bursting in rays from its golden coat. I cautioned the Raja, but at the same time I was puzzled. The tiger was coming to the kill before sunset, and, moreover, it was coming at a great speed. The tiger usually comes after sunset, except in the very densest forests not trod by humans, and it comes slowly and stealthily, encircles the kill, sits at a distance and has to be perfectly satisfied that it is free from danger before it will approach. This was a thin forest with a road only half a mile away and cultivated fields close by. I was quite at a loss to understand why the tiger was in such a hurry. It went straight to the kill and commenced dragging at it to loosen it from the rope, fiercely and urgently. I whispered to the Raja to shoot now or it would be off with the kill, but both he and the Sikh appeared to be under the impression they should not shoot until it commenced eating. I, an impatient and perhaps arrogant youth, stood up and shot the tiger, taking my aim over the head of the Sikh shikari. The tiger was hit, it roared quietly but ran away, just at the moment that the realization came to

me that I had no right whatever to shoot until the Raja had fired the first round. When I explained, in no way penitent, that as they had not fired I had no option but to do so, the Raja retorted that as I boasted that I never missed, why did the tiger run away? I bet him that if the tiger had not been hit then he could cut off my hands. I said I was more accustomed to shoot from the ground and that the cartridge was old and rusty and quite unsuitable, but tomorrow we would search for the animal and he would see that it had been hit. I then told the Raja to get down and we could reach the car whilst it was still daylight.

But the Raja refused to leave the machan until the Gond party came for him—they were waiting at the roadside. They had been instructed to come to the machan after hearing the gunfire, but I knew they would not come after only one shot, so I asked the Raja's permission to get down and go for them. He refused so we sat on and darkness came down, and then he had the idea of firing a few shots to bring them. They didn't come. At about 9 o'clock a biting, cold wind arose and the Raja was cold and hungry and fretting to get back to camp. I offered again to go and get the Gonds, but the objection this time was that I had no torch. When I insisted that I didn't need one, that I knew the forest like the back of my hand, the Raja agreed, but when I asked for the loan of a rifle, this was refused and I was told to take the .12 for which there was only shot ammunition available. I set off, sent the Gonds and the car to the Raja, went to Kantabadi and was asleep by 10 o'clock.

In the morning I took fifteen cow-buffaloes and went in search of the tiger. I found the blood trail and followed it for about a mile until we came across rough and difficult country—a deep ravine with large stones and rocks which the buffs could not negotiate, so we went on without the buffs very cautiously. Babu Gond called out that he could see two cubs underneath a rock. Ranger Bhasker Rao wanted me to shoot them but instead I offered to catch them, when with

roar after roar the tigress appeared to be among us—everything around that was movable started trembling with the sheer vibration of its roar, and my companions without exception went up to the tree-tops in a matter of seconds. I was left alone but there was no tigress visible, only the echoes rolling from rock to rock. After a while I decided it must be in one of the nearby caves so I called the men down to come and help me with the cubs. They came fearfully and unwillingly, and helped me make a noose of thin bamboo. When I approached the cubs they hissed just like cobras, but I got the noose round the neck of the first one and dragged it out; the hidden tigress gave another roar and the men disappeared like magic. However, Babu Gond returned and helped me tie up the cub's feet with a rope and then we dragged out the other one. During this process one of them bit my finger and another scratched my arm. The arm wound healed rapidly but the finger became swollen and took ten days to heal. I had a good look round for the tigress but could not find it; there was a lot of blood on the ground so it may have been seriously wounded and perhaps a good thing that we took the cubs away. We took the cubs to the Raja at the Rest House and went back with long bamboo poles to try to force the tigress out of the caves; some of the caves were extremely long and the poles could not reach far enough in, so presumably the animal had retired to the far end of one of them to die.

The cubs became tame and friendly with me after two days but were quite fierce towards people they did not know.

The Raja shot a tiger from the ground in daylight two days later. Another two days later, a kill was reported from the same place, but this time it was necessary to erect a night machan. The Raja did not get the tiger. My lord tiger did not even come near the kill, and no wonder! Can you erect a machan large and strong enough to hold the Raja, weighing 280 pounds, Sardarji weighing 200 pounds and myself at 180 pounds, a big easy chair, two big cushions, two pillows, one pot, one 12-volt battery, one big searchlight, four guns,

one first-aid box, one tiffin carrier, one pan (betel) bag, one cartridge bag, two big water-bottles, one fruit basket, some other miscellany, and not notify every animal in the jungle of your presence? Eight to ten men were required to carry this load, four men to carry the specially long ladder, specially made because on the only tree strong enough for this machan, the machan had had to be erected at a height of twenty feet. A virtual caravan used to walk through the jungle carrying all this paraphernalia.

So we started dismantling the machan again about 9 o'clock. The last of all to come down was the Raja. He complained that his shoes would slip on the ladder so he came down barefoot; while getting down he complained that the bamboos on the ladder were hurting his feet and that he was about to fall and should be caught. I got up the ladder and told him to sit over my shoulders. When he did so I really knew what 280 pounds felt like and repented of my foolishness. With all this flesh and bones over me I started to descend but I had hardly moved a foot when the Raja cried out that he would fall and I was not to move. I did not know what to do, I was half-way through the ladder with the weight, the Raja was perspiring profusely and it was dripping down upon me and I began to perspire too. The fifteen men below were running about yelling instructions to us which were of no possible use and then I asked the Raja if he could get down the ladder if he had his slippers on. Oh, yes, easy! So I sent for his slippers and put them on him with my own hands. He then put his two slippered feet on to the bamboos of the ladder and step by step like the two halves of a pantomime horse we got down. The Raja lay down on the cushions gasping heavily and rested for a long time. I was glad to see him reclining, I had had visions of being flattened to pulp under his weight if he had fallen on me, and, of course, if he had injured himself I would have been responsible, and gained a black mark in my shikar career. I vowed I would never take the Raja into a machan again, and on the next occasion, when I took him to Khurchana, I saw that the beat was in daylight

and that he sat on the ground, although he did take along all his paraphernalia. He shot a tigress, two tigers and a panther and was very, very happy. His whole total over the eleven days he stayed in the district was five tigers, one panther and many other game animals and I got two tiger cubs without a shot.

The Raja came back again in April 1941 and I took him into the interior of the district about thirty-two miles from Nanda. This is a Sport Centre for Government Officers and a very good forest Rest House is built here along with a good road connecting it to Betul. The natives are also very well trained in beating. During this tour, the Raja killed five tigers, three panthers, many spotted deer, stags and other wild animals, and was extremely jovial all the time, telling me many good stories and anecdotes.

Although I took every possible opportunity to continue with a way of life that was dear to my heart, it had not been easy during the past few years. In 1939, I had taken on several appointments both for the war effort and in my own line of forest contracting, but my business was not receiving the attention it should. I was given a stern lesson in 1933, when I lost everything through the defalcations of my staff, but I had gradually built it all up again. Nevertheless, I found it extremely irksome and the slightest inducement would take me off into the jungle again with knife and rifle, either on my own or with sportsmen arriving in the district for shikar. About this time I took the District Superintendent of Police, Mr. A. N. P. Jones, on tour to Shahpur, twenty-two miles from Betul, and on several occasions I answered calls from outlying villages to go and deal with some animal that was persistently running off with the domestic animals and generally pestering and frightening the villagers.

In 1944, Mr. M. J. K. Sullivan took over duty as Deputy Commissioner of Betul and he also was a very keen sportsman. We went first to Nanda for shikar, and in case the reader is thinking that the ease with which we find a kill is too good

to be true, I would mention that although we waited two days and nights, nothing was reported. We moved on to Amdhana, six miles away from whence we had received news of a natural kill, leaving Mrs. Sullivan and her children in Nanda.

When we were assembled at about 4 o'clock in the afternoon having tea, I heard someone shouting for a gun to kill a reptile, and I saw a snake about fifteen yards away running in a field. I ran after it, caught hold of it and bringing it back to camp put it into a big earthenware jar. Some fifty men collected to see what was going to happen. I told them that the Hindus regard a snake as being possessed of divinity, even as God himself, so I would pray to it and tomorrow there would be another kill; if there was no kill, I would divide the snake into three parts. The snake was imprisoned all night and in the morning there was no news of a kill. Mr. Sullivan arrived to say he was ready for the march to the Amdhana kill for the beat, and when I went out of the tent to join him one of Mr. Sullivan's servants reminded me about the snake and implored me to take it with me for fear it should escape and attack them whilst we were away. I went back, took the snake out of the jar, and went with it towards Mr. Sullivan. He was curious and asked me if it was alive. "Yes," I said, and put it down for him to see and, of course, it ran off into a bush; I caught it again, released it again, caught it again and continued to play with it like a cat with a mouse. I am afraid that I must have appeared as a very stupid show-off to Mr. Sullivan, but who has not done silly things on the spur of the moment that under longer and wiser contemplation would never have occurred?

Finally, the snake lost its temper with me and bit me on the hand; the wound at once commenced to bleed furiously. I cut the snake into three parts and threw it away, but Mr. Sullivan was very agitated and convinced I was going to die then and there from snake poisoning. I told him that snake-bite did not harm me at all and he would not believe me until his servant, Sitaram, remarked that Jamshed had hundreds of snakes lying all over his house and could cure snake-bite as

easy as winking. Mr. Sullivan sent for potassium but I did not need it. I got a jug of water, washed the wound, squeezed it clean and put on carbolic acid, then burnt it.

I urged Mr. Sullivan, who was still in a state of apprehension, to forget about it and remarked that it was high time we got going to Amdhana Camp. We got into the car, Mr. Sullivan driving and I sitting beside him, and at regular intervals all that day he kept asking me how I felt.

The next morning he appeared to have a little fever, whether from worry over me or in natural sequence I do not know. He asked me to go out with his gun and bring in a peacock or a chital deer for food.

I took a bullock cart and driver with me and reached the outskirts of the village just as the sun was rising, bathing the whole jungle panorama in a golden glow. We had gone so far when we came upon a nala which the bullocks could not cross and we turned round to find another route; ten paces away, just within the tall grass, unbelievably, there stood the most beautiful tiger. It was young, but full-grown and in the prime of life, the sun striking its tawny body and looking as though it had just had its stripes polished up. It was proud, conscious of its youth and not caring a fig for men, just as a certain youth, Jamshed, similarly over-proud, did not care a fig for tigers. I had S.S.G. in both barrels of the 12-bore and it is not usual to kill outright, with this ammunition, a tiger in the full bloom of male youth. But I took a risk. I shouted loudly to momentarily petrify it, but then saw that it had decided to attack us. I thought I could save myself, but not the bullocks, and I knew that everyone would laugh when they heard that a tiger had taken my bullocks, and I, with a loaded gun was unable to prevent it. No one would listen if I said the tiger was too beautiful or that the position or circumstances were not favourable, or that the ammunition was too light. I searched around for some heavier ammunition and found an old, weather-beaten ball cartridge, which I tried in the left barrel, leaving the S.S.G. in the right one. Then I told the driver to

draw forward. I thought we were moving forward at first, but found it was the tiger which was moving towards us and I had better shoot quick. The moment the ball hit the animal it leapt towards me, stopping at a distance of two paces and roaring at the top of its voice. I kept staring at the eyes of the tiger and sitting quietly in the cart waiting for it to proceed further so that I might put the muzzle inside its mouth and then fire. I quite fail to understand why it just turned aside and walked into the bush. I could have put another shot into its hind-quarters, but if it had only added another wound and the animal became enraged, I had nothing but an empty barrel left, an easy prey to a demented tiger. Although I had shot it in the right place, the cartridge had been so old that it had merely penetrated the flesh.

Not only were the bullocks shivering, but the driver was trembling and perspiring and whereas the bullocks had refused to move towards the tiger, now that it was gone they went off like the wind and there was imminent danger of the cart turning turtle. We couldn't stop them and they only halted when they came inside the village.

I told Mr. Sullivan and asked permission to go back with my rifle but, in spite of his fever, he was so keen on tiger shikar that he insisted on getting up and coming with me. I sent on about twenty cow-buffs and we left about 8 a.m. When Mr. Sullivan saw the pug marks and the cart track he was amazed that the tiger had come so close. With a twinkle in his eye he said that the tiger, on coming nearer, realized it stood before the great Jamshed and had beat a hasty retreat.

The tiger had been bleeding profusely and left a trail which the buffs found easy to follow, but they are always terribly slow about the job, and after we had been following them for about four furlongs, Mr. Sullivan, who was running a temperature, said that as the buffs were so slow it would be better if he went on ahead of them. I asked him not to take such a risk—the grass was too tall for him to spot the tiger easily and it could pounce before he had time to raise his rifle. But he

seemed irritable, perhaps due to his fever, and said it was no use following the buffs at a snail's pace and he went ahead shouting that he was not feeling well and could not afford to lose much time in the hunt. He went down into a deep ravine, but I ran after him and caught him by the hands; he pulled himself free and asked if I thought he was a brainless idiot; he *had* shot tigers before, he finished sarcastically. In spite of his protests I followed him. I told him that I knew he was a great shikari, that he had shot many, many animals, but he had done so sitting on a car or standing in position on the ground and had never come face to face with a wounded tiger. I told him that searching for a wounded tiger was an open invitation to death; I told him that notwithstanding his power as Deputy Commissioner, I would not allow him to expose himself to such danger; I pleaded with him, begged him to return. Mr. Sullivan, who was hot with fever, became even hotter with anger and began to perspire freely. This must have cooled his mind down, because he suddenly sat on the ground; so I stood, blocking his way. After a pregnant pause, he quietly asked what was the next move. Should we continue the search or abandon it? I bade him go back to camp and let me make the search with the buffs in the proper manner. I talked to him calmly and told him that I had had on occasion to caution Mr. Bourne in a like manner and he used to laugh at my warnings and boasted that he had killed fifty-five tigers without my assistance. Mr. Bourne used to say that to listen to cautions would make him a coward, but I told him that one day he would find out that what I said was true. I told Mr. Sullivan that I didn't know if Mr. Bourne found out or not before his fifty-sixth tiger finished him.

So Mr. Sullivan agreed to heed my warnings, but decided to remain with me, and we followed on the trail for a couple of miles. It was now 1 o'clock and we had been after the tiger since morning, and we were very hungry. Soon we heard the Gonds shouting that they had seen the tiger. I had to call up to the tree-tops, where, naturally, the Gonds had gravitated,

and they said it was very much alive and not likely to die very soon. It had gone away into the grass very briskly. I suggested that we go across country to the place it is likely to emerge and the Gonds would beat it out towards us. But the Gonds became very solicitous about the health of poor Mr. Sullivan. Poor Mr. Sullivan had fever, he had walked continuously for five hours, he was feeling the strain, he should return to camp at once; besides, they themselves were extremely hungry and the tiger was a fearsome beast. In one thing they were right: Mr. Sullivan certainly was feeling the strain, and as he refused to allow me to proceed alone, I had to give in, and we all went back to camp for lunch.

The next day we again went in search of the tiger, but there were no further traces of blood and it was obvious that the animal had gone a very long way, so we abandoned it.

We decided to return to Nanda camp. On the drive back Mr. Sullivan, who was now recovered from his fever, and I took turn about in sitting on the bonnet of the car with gun ready for anything that offered. We did this because it is difficult to aim properly from inside the car: you can only shoot at one side and you cannot shoot forwards; sitting on the bonnet gives you a good panorama. But it is not very safe to sit on the bonnet; if the driver brakes suddenly, or the wheels hit a big stone, there is a danger of being knocked off, and if an animal is wounded it may leap at you right over the car bonnet.

We were hardly three miles from Amdhana when we saw in the headlights of the car a panther coming down the road straight towards us. When the car approached, it left the road and stood beside a bush. The D.C. leaped off the bonnet as soon as the car stopped, and in spite of my warnings, headed post haste towards the panther, the light of battle in his eyes. He had a torch fitted to his gun and, taking aim, he shot the panther whilst I was in the act of jumping after him. The panther fell but jumped up again and took to its heels, with Mr. Sullivan hot-speed after it. I shouted, I protested, but he didn't listen to me and I had to follow him to give what help

I could. I caught him from behind and tried to force him to return, but he protested he would lose the "cheetah". Back we were again in the same predicament. Mr. Sullivan adamant, I imploring, pointing out the dangers and the likely behaviour of the panther, the darkness of the night and the futility of the search. Even when I tried to block his way he endeavoured to push on. So I kept on talking to him, allowing as much time to elapse as possible, hoping that the panther would weaken and die. With prodigious effort I wasted about half an hour and then when impasse was reached directed the driver and peons up trees with torchlight to see if they could locate the panther. They said the panther was nowhere to be seen and came down, so we proceeded a little distance with the torches. Then we sent the peons up trees again to report and in this manner we came to a deep nala—it was five feet deep and four feet wide and there was a jungle of dense bush on each bank. The driver climbed a tree and with the aid of his torchlight looked into the nala, but there was no sign of the panther. Because of the dense bush I knew that the panther could quite easily be there and not be seen, but Mr. Sullivan was convinced that the panther had crossed over and insisted on going on. I knew from years of experience that the animal would have taken refuge there, and to my despair we started off the usual argument. The discussion, pressure on the part of the D.C. and resistance on mine, was still going on when we heard a loud growl from the inside of the nala. I could have embraced this panther for its timely interference, instead I sent the driver up into a tree again to try to locate its position. He reported he could see it beside the bush growth and I offered him the .12 with buckshot, to shoot it. The driver replied that it was in a difficult position and, although only about ten feet away, it was in shadow. With this fresh perplexity we had to try to find a way into the nala. If I had been alone I would have taken a risk, exactly the same as Mr. Sullivan would have done, but there is a difference. If a shikari takes risks when he is alone, well, that is just too bad if the tiger gets the better of him. But

when a sportsman enlists the aid of a shikari in a big-game hunt, then that shikari has a tremendous responsibility for the sportsman. If the sportsman should be mauled or killed by a wild animal, regardless of the circumstances, all the blame immediately attaches to the shikari in charge and there is hardly a loophole through which he can escape. Therefore, a professional shikari will take endless precautions that he would never bother taking for himself.

The difficulty now was to locate the panther by directions from the peons in the trees. The D.C. and I both went into the nala whilst the driver and the peons kept the panther covered with their torches. Only when we came within fifteen yards of it was the animal clearly visible to us. It was lying very quiet, watching our approach. Mr. Sullivan indicated that we should both fire simultaneously, but as I wanted to keep it constantly before my eye without the momentary distraction of firing, I let him fire first, so that I could immediately follow if he missed. But the D.C. was an excellent shot and it fell at once. He would have run to it in exultation, but I warned him that the panther is a deceitful animal and feigns death, coming back to life when approached near enough for it to act. I asked the driver to fling stones at it, and when it failed to twitch, I knew it was dead.

Some time after this shikar, Mr. Sullivan came again and asked me to accompany him on a big tiger round-up. I suggested we go to Kantabadi Kanjitala, Khurchana and Gawasen, then on to Bornala and Kanchitokra. During this tour of six days we bagged six tigers between us, but not without subjecting ourselves to the whole gamut of exertion, sweat, hopes, fears, suspense, danger and exultation.

One day a report came in at Betul, from Mazhar Ali Patel, that at Mhowpani a tiger had killed a bullock. The D.C. sent for me but I was away, so he went to Mhowpani with Mazhar, got a machan prepared and sat over the kill for the night. At

about 9 p.m. the tiger came to the kill and started devouring the bullock. Mr. Sullivan lit the torch and saw the tiger facing him. He fired, but as the machan was very high and the tiger too close to him, he missed its head but shot the lower lip and a bit of the chest. The tiger, not much damaged, escaped. The D.C. was on the machan the whole night, and when he got down in the morning he perceived the blood trail and followed it to a water-hole. The tiger was sitting in a bamboo grove, with its mate, nursing its wound. As soon as they approached, the two animals jumped upon the party. The men ran helter-skelter, leaving Mr. Sullivan alone, but he managed to retreat and returned to Betul. I had also come to Betul by then and he told me the story and asked me to go with him to search for the wounded tiger. I was very unwilling to go because I knew he was not likely to listen to me in an emergency and I had no enthusiasm for playing with wounded tigers in his company. The responsibility for these prominent sportsmen's lives is a hundred times more onerous than the actual dangers of the jungle life. However, Mr. Sullivan would not be put off and he promised to behave and do exactly as he was told by me.

We left Betul and arrived at Mhowpani about 2 p.m., taking a few men with us. I proceeded ahead, very cautiously, and Mr. Sullivan followed with the others; I knew it was all wrong to go without the buffaloes. After a while we came to a grove of bamboos where visibility was very restricted, to almost ten paces, and a man could not stand erect. I thought it unwise to go any further but Mr. Sullivan insisted. I flatly refused but he insisted we go on. Here we go again, I thought, this is absolutely the last time I go with him, but the present was the present and it had to be coped with. I stopped him, physically, from going on, and he must have remembered his promise, because he meekly asked what we should do next. I told him the best thing to do was to keep a buff as a bait at a nearby water-hole, the only one in the jungle hereabouts; a kill was sure to be registered and we would kill the tiger sitting over a machan in the night.

We did this, and next morning, to see if the kill had been made, arrived at the jungle at 6 a.m. We proceeded by a foot-path towards the water-hole; I was leading and Mr. Sullivan and the others following closely. We communicated by signs, and were so quiet that not even a leaf crunched. We now approached a nala and I could see pug marks of a tiger. While I was watching these marks to find out which way the tiger had left, Mr. Sullivan went on ahead, and because the nala was on open ground I did not watch closely after him. The others halted with me and Mr. Sullivan walked on alone. Suddenly wild fowl came panicking out of the bushes and sat up on a tree-top. I suspected something must be wrong and probably the tiger was in the neighbourhood, when the Gond who was with me spotted it almost at the same moment as I did. It was about forty yards away and sitting close to where Mr. Sullivan was then standing; it was ready to pounce. And then, to my horror, Mr. Sullivan started moving even closer to the tiger where it waited for its prey below the nala. Mr. Sullivan could not see the tiger because he was in tall grass. With only ten paces to go I knew it was absolutely no use calling to the D.C. Either way, if I shouted or kept quiet, Mr. Sullivan was heading rapidly towards death. I had my .577 double barrel with me and I shot the animal between the eyes. It remained in the crouching position, like a stone statue, but quite dead. Mr. Sullivan looked round and came to me to ask what had happened. When he saw the tiger he turned very white in the face, but, pulling himself together, asked why it hadn't jumped on him. Explaining the split-second precision that fate had allowed between its pounce and my shot was quite beyond me, so I let the question remain unanswered. If fate had not put me there at that moment I very much fear that Mr. Sullivan would have gone the way Mr. Bourne had, and the Captain in Kanjital and a Colonel who had lost his life in Punji.

On examining the tiger we found that the lower lip and the whole of the chest was swollen up and inflamed and the tiger must have been in great agony, although we later found that

it had killed the buff bait. As the kill was still there and the tiger was bound to have a mate, we decided to build a machan for the night. Mr. Sullivan would go back to Betul and return at about 5 p.m. At the appointed time Mr. Sullivan sent a note expressing his inability to come because of important administrative work, and telling me to mount the machan and kill the tiger's mate instead of himself doing so.

I went into the machan at 6 p.m. and as there were black clouds in the sky I asked the men to remain in the vicinity and come to take me back to camp if the rain was heavy. I was sitting just behind the tree on the machan where the kill was lying. Half an hour later I heard a moaning sound from the direction of Pulli Ghogra and I knew that the tiger was mourning its loss and there was an infinite sadness in the sound. All the animals in the jungle would know and pity the tiger the loss of its mate; the peacocks, the monkeys and the wild fowl started crying and chattering in sympathy; the massing clouds and the far-off flashes of lightning indicated that the whole of nature was in tune with the lonesome tiger. I, however, was also alone, waiting for my prey and savouring the knowledge that an early kill would mean an early return to camp and a good night's sleep.

I waited and waited, but there was nothing except the myriad night sounds of the jungle. Again the moans and growls and darkness was approaching. I prayed for the tiger's speedy arrival in the last of the daylight. While I was busy with my thoughts, the machan gave a sudden jerk. I picked up my gun and peered below the machan to see the cause, but there was nothing there. I thought perhaps one of the supports, not properly fastened, was settling down. I had hardly recovered from the first jerk when I again got a bad shaking. I looked beneath and all around and was so puzzled that I even forgot about the tiger. Again the jerks, and I couldn't see a thing. I, who had never felt fear in the face of danger, was filled with dread and wanted very badly to find out the cause of the jerks. The jerks continued and I was completely baffled and finally I

decided I must get away and quickly before the daylight faded and before anything really disastrous happened. Then I thought it would be abject cowardice to run away and I would completely lose face if I did so. I looked towards the sky for help from the Almighty; I prayed to God to spare me cowardice and to give me strength to face this unknown danger. I sought His help and I got it. Hardly had I finished my prayer than a flock of birds came whirring over me—I only saw them because I was looking up to the sky—and they settled on the top of my tree; as they did so the tree gave another jerk as before and then I knew. The tree was finely balanced and pliable. To prove it I gave the trunk a heavy blow, the birds scattered and the tree jerked as before. If I had run away, believing the tree to be haunted, I would have had no courage to sit in a machan again and it would have ruined my future as a shikari. I would for ever more have believed in evil spirits, but God wished otherwise and saved me.

In the meantime, while I had been perturbed and restless, the tiger had seen me and was moving about this way and that and refused to go to the kill. I waited until 9 p.m. and then I must have fallen asleep. I woke up at midnight, soaking wet with a violent thunderstorm in progress. I called and shouted for the men to come for me but they had gone away. It was not safe to return to camp alone because the way was through very dense jungle, so I hit upon a plan. I took the gun apart, put it under my pillow, put the mattress on top of me as protection. In about half an hour the rain stopped, so I put the mattress down again, upside down, and went back to sleep. In the morning, the sun was shining brightly; I got down and with my gun went to the water-hole. I found that the tiger had been there and I then went to the place where I had shot the tigress the day before, and found a large hole dug to a depth of about one yard. It had kept on digging until it could no longer smell the blood of its beloved, and then I found from following its tracks, it had followed the blood spots to the place on the road where we had loaded the dead tigress

on to the car. It had passed the machan several times. In return for my salvation the Almighty had decided to save the tiger too. But not for long; it must have been reserved for Mr. Sullivan.

Some days later, Mr. Sullivan was seated in a machan at the same place, waiting for a tiger which was reported to be frequenting the spot. The wife of the District Superintendent of Police was also with him. After Mr. Sullivan had been waiting for some time and had become drowsy, he sat up and asked the lady if she had seen or heard anything. She said she had seen something creeping behind a nearby rock, so Mr. Sullivan got down from the machan and stood up on top of the rock. When he was looking the other way, the tiger came out, and the D.C. only saw it when it was two yards away. But the tiger seemed not to care and headed towards the shade with its head down for it was noon-time and very hot. Hastily, Mr. Sullivan adjusted his gun and fired. The shot hit it at the joint of chest and stomach. The tiger roared loudly and ran off. Mr. Sullivan followed and the tiger went behind another rock, from which it dashed out just as Mr. Sullivan approached. But he was very quick and put a bullet into its chest, whereupon it fell over backwards behind the rock. It came out again, ran a short distance and took cover; Mr. Sullivan followed it, the driver and the cook now keeping him company. They all fired in unison and it was as dead as mutton.

Mr. Sullivan was very, very lucky. I would never have allowed him to follow it. He was wrong in going up to the rock in the first place—he should have taken up a position where he could see and shoot it coming out; in the second place he should not have fired a random shot after it but should have waited for it to pause and look round when he would have had a better target—in hot weather when a tiger is disturbed out of his den, it always hangs around waiting to get back in again. In the third place he should never have followed it into the forest without the support of trained men. Although I acknowledge the bravery of Mr. Sullivan I deplore his reckless-

ness. Fate cannot for ever protect and the strength of a man is nothing to the strength of a tiger. A tiger generally kills full-grown, heavy, demon-like bulls, of which even an elephant is afraid, and when there is a hand-to-hand fight between a bull and a tiger, about two to three acres of land appears to be tilled. Big trees of the girth of three feet fall during the scuffle. A bull's neck is too big for a tiger's claws so the tiger catches and breaks the hind legs first and when the bull falls it can then catch it by the neck. Sometimes such a scuffle continues the whole night and the noise is heard for miles around; the tiger will then drag the heavy bull for many furlongs after it is dead.

One fine morning, Mr. Safdar, a market gardener in the city of Betul, came to inform me that a panther had killed a cow in his garden. I laughed at him and said panthers do not come inside a big city and that his cow must have died of natural causes and the jackals and hyena had feasted off it. Mr. Safdar drew himself up importantly and announced that he himself was a shikari and should know a panther's kill.

I went with him and saw that there had indeed been a good fight between a panther and the cow. Then Safdar told me he had heard the cow fighting and crying in the night for a long time, but he had not gone out to see what was wrong because, well, it was cold and a dark night and it was also raining, and, besides, his neighbours' cows were often let into his garden secretly in the night to be fattened up, and although he was sure it was a panther he had hoped it was one of the neighbours' cows which was being attacked, which might prevent him being so exploited in the future.

Scarcely hiding my amusement I went to see Mr. Sullivan, who was very sceptical, too, about a panther in the heart of Betul, but I took him to the spot and he was convinced. We decided to put up a machan in a nim tree nearby and to sit there during the evening. I made no cover as I thought that a panther which was bold enough to penetrate the populated city would scarcely take fright at the sight of a man in a tree. In the evening it was raining heavily and Mr. Sullivan said he

wouldn't dream of sitting in it all night. Mr. Tahsin Siddique ("Bedil"—a well-known Urdu poet and a retired Civil Servant) who had a house in the district and used to be quite a sportsman in his young day, asked to sit with me when he heard that the D.C. was not coming out; he wanted to try out his old skill. At sunset we went up into the machan and Mr. Siddique asked me to shine the torch while he did the shooting. After we had been sitting a short time the rain became torrential and Mr. Siddique said he was an old man and couldn't stand such weather and wanted to get down, suggesting I come down along with him. But I told him that rain was nothing to me, I was accustomed to take a bath in freezing cold water in the month of December, so he went home alone. I remained sitting, drenched with rain, and about 8 p.m., much to my amazement, the panther appeared whilst the streets were crowded with people. Lights were shining in houses all around and people talking and laughing loudly, and thunder and lightning was crashing and flashing in the sky. I took aim with the gun and the next time the lightning flashed I saw the panther bending over the cow; when I switched on the torch it looked up at me. I had only my 12-bore as I thought the .577 was too big a weapon to be using in the city. I shot the panther on the shoulder joint with L.G., and it shrieked loudly, went into a nearby bush and fell down. I could hear it vomiting and then breathing slowly and gasping and I knew it was dying. Safdar then called out, asking if he could come but I held him off until I was sure it was dead.

It is very rare indeed for panther and tiger to come right into a city or even a large town and I cannot understand how this panther had reached the place it did without causing pandemonium among the populace. Many, in fact most, of the people living in Betul have never seen a panther or tiger, and in the confusion of domestic animals which wander about the streets it is possible that this panther could have slipped through gardens and alleyways without being noticed.



This huge tiger fell to the gun of Mr. Owen L. Godwin, who was later photographed with the author and his three sons



Two more victims of the
author's gun a black buck
(left) and a nil (blue bull)



Mr. P. G. Purshe came to Betul in charge of the Treasury, in 1945. He wanted very much to shoot a tiger, but could not go on shikar because of his duties. He asked me to help him and said that he could perhaps arrange a very short leave. I told him not to bother with leave—the tigers were in my pocket and I could bring one out any time. He thought I was joking, but I assured him that he could get a tiger and only be away from Betul for about two hours; there was absolutely no need to arrange leave. It would also save him expense—baits, petrol and wages to beaters all had to be paid for, but we could go out to a natural kill at very little cost.

During December, I became ill with a high temperature, and one morning friends were sitting around my bed talking to me when a Gowli from Tikari came running to me and said that a tiger had killed his cow in the Chikhlar forests, only an hour ago. The Chikhlar forest was only about two miles away. I got out of bed to the consternation of my friends, who told me I mustn't go with fever on me, but I replied that I would likely have pneumonia before I was finished but nothing would keep me in when there was shikar at hand. I dressed and sent for the car and driver and then I remembered Mr. Purshe. I went straight to his bungalow; it was a Sunday morning and he and Mrs. Purshe were lounging in the sun. He sent for a chair for me but I said there was no time to be lost and would he please get dressed at once and he could be back with his tiger within two hours.

We set off at 12 noon in the car and soon came across the Mukaddam and two Gonds from Chikhlar who were coming into Betul for Sunday market. I stopped the car and asked them to jump in, we would return soon. I stopped the car half a mile from the kill; I was sure the tiger would be in the vicinity because the kill was made at 8 o'clock in the morning, the forest was green and dense and no one had disturbed the tiger. I was so familiar with this jungle that I expected the tiger to come out after the shortest ever beat for the kill had been made inside a nala where there were dense bushes nearby.

I posted three men for the beat and kept two by my side as stoppers—the distance of the beat would be two furlongs at the outside. I put Mr. Purshe into a tree because he had never seen a tiger in the jungle before; I stood underneath it. I told him to load one barrel of his gun with ball and the other with buckshot (L.G.) and not to shoot until I instructed him to and, of course, I told him all the things he could and could not do, which must usually be told to a beginner in shikar.

Mr. Purshe, being higher up, spotted the tiger before I did, but I soon saw it coming across the nala with its head lowered. It came within a distance of thirty yards and stopped, so I gave Mr. Purshe the word and he fired. The tiger fell with a furious roar, got up and started tearing things up; I fired my .577 because the beaters were very close and Mr. Purshe had not fired again, and it fell dead. I brought Mr. Purshe down and I was very pleased that he had been so fearless and followed my instructions to the letter. He said that although he had been completely overawed on seeing the tiger for the first time, he had not felt afraid. The only misunderstanding was that he had waited for me to tell him when to fire the second shot, which I did not do. He was so enthusiastic that he said he was going to keep me company on the ground next time.

The tiger measured 8 feet 6 inches. After the measurement I asked him the time—it was 2 p.m., so with a sly grin I pointed out that we had commenced at 12 noon!

Shortly after taking Mr. Purshe on shikar, I heard rumours of three tigers frequenting the roads leading to Shahpur, so one evening I went with my car to have a look around. I was returning after a fruitless search when, on the slopes of Barethaghat, I saw a tigress and two cubs in the rays from the headlights of the car. I was driving and my servant was sitting beside me with a loaded .577. When he saw the tigers he trembled and cried out. I had no torch and because of the glass windscreen couldn't shoot from the steering-wheel. When the car approached, the three animals went to the left and halted

in a road cutting. I got down from the car leaving the engine running, brought the barrel of my gun in front of the lights, keeping myself in the darkness behind, and as the tigress was staring at the lights I shot it near the chest. The animal took a jump, roared, and fell down dead in front of the car. The cubs were as big as panthers and they went down into a deep ravine and stood there. The lights of the car did not reach into the ravine so I drove it to the edge but it was still no use. If only I had had a torch I could have shot both the cubs.

My servant, who had tried to prevent me getting out of the car, and who was so insistent that I had to give him a slap, was nowhere to be seen when I returned to the car, but, on looking carefully, I found him crouching underneath the seat. I hauled him up by the hair and told him the tigress was dead, but when I reversed the car and brought it near to the dead tigress, asking him to get down and help me lift the animal into it, he was terrified the cubs would attack us. I got him out by force and when I gave him a slap over the buttocks I found him all wet.

On the approach of the summer season in 1946, a tiger was creating havoc in the area surrounded by the villages of Chikhlar, Umarwani, Dharakhoh and Uddan. It had devoured 150 milch animals within the space of six or seventh months. Several times the Deputy Commissioner, Betul, and Mr. Mehta, Commissioner, Nagpur, with local shikaris had mounted machans to shoot it but were unsuccessful. This tiger had become intelligent—it made its kill during the day and ate its fill there and then, leaving the jungle at night. The villagers were losing buffs and bullocks every alternate day, the tiger being so bold that it attacked whole herds in spite of the presence of the grazier and other men who were frightened away by its roars. Losses to the tune of about twenty thousand rupees had been incurred and several homes had been broken up.

On several occasions I had arranged beats, all to no purpose. But everything has an end and this tiger was now counting its

days. I offered a reward to anyone in the district who could inform me *immediately* a kill had been made. One day a man came to me from Dharakhoh saying that the tiger had just recently made a kill of a bullock; the villagers were collected ready and he implored me to come and finish off this tiger once and for all.

I went to collect Mr. Purshe, but he was very busy and wanted to finish off some work first. When I explained that delay had always been the trouble in the past, he compromised and promised to be ready by 3 p.m. and said he would bring along a Mr. Rehman, a newcomer to his department.

Fifteen men, with drums, accompanied us to the kill; ten of them were detailed as beaters and the rest as stoppers. Near a nala I seated Mr. Rehman on a tree, I sat down on a stone and Mr. Purshe was on a tree near me. He wanted to sit on the ground this time, but I told him he was far too inexperienced yet—he had previously scared tigers away at Kantabadi and Chikhlar, acting against my advice. I told him that I could quite easily save my own life but in shielding him I might have to sacrifice it and he thereupon went up a tree.

After only fifteen minutes of the beat, I saw the tiger coming at a distance. Mr. Purshe had also seen the tiger; he was seated with his legs hanging under the branch of a tree which had no leaves. He was wearing white pants, which he had refused to change upon my advice, and when he saw the tiger he moved slightly. When the tiger was eighty yards away it stopped, staring in Mr. Purshe's direction. Above me in the tree, Mr. Purshe was changing positions, the branch was moving and making noises. I was enraged, but I dared not speak in case it made matters worse. The tiger retreated, past a nala, and sat down underneath and inside a green bush. The beaters came forward from behind the bush but the tiger sat still. The nala was about twenty-five to thirty feet deep and there was a cutting beside the tiger, so sharp that neither man nor animal could climb up. The stoppers had seen the tiger come out and hide itself inside the nala and when the beaters came forward

they hilariously told them that they had left the tiger behind. The Gonds, no doubt actuated more by ridicule from their fellows than inherent bravery, went back and sounded their drums from behind the tiger, but still it did not come out. Then they threw stones and the tiger left its hideout and came forward at a gallop, roaring loudly. Because it had both seen and heard the stoppers in their exchange of banter, it charged right away. When about eighty yards away Mr. Rehman fired at it with his 12-bore. The fire went wide and only angered the tiger, which came at me, but I withheld my fire until it was close enough to be accurate. I knew if it went back on the beaters it would kill some of them because there wasn't a tree anywhere near that the beaters could climb. Mr. Rehman had made the mistake of firing with a 12-bore at far too long a range and now Mr. Purshe made the second mistake: he fired just as the tiger was coming within my range, and pierced its stomach. A stomach wound is never immediately fatal but fills the tiger with an immense fury. And so it was; the tiger screamed and roared, chewed up stones, logs of wood, knocked down trees, and, with the intelligence some people would deny, knew that the cause of its affliction came from the tree at the foot of which I was sitting. Like lightning it came, roaring. I had decided that the only thing to do was to shove the barrel of my gun down its throat and fire. But this tiger did not come with an open mouth as is usual; it came on with closed mouth and stood up on its two hind legs like a bear. It was so close I could feel the fetid stench of its breath. I poked the barrel of my gun in its chest and fired. An express cartridge fired from a .577 is like a cannon ball. The tiger fell down and rolled away a few feet and in this moment I ran behind the tree to take cover. The tiger stood up and ran straight forward the way it was facing, which, thank God, was not in my direction.

I loaded my rifle and ran after it. If I did not find it everyone would have to remain on the trees indefinitely. After a short distance I saw the tiger about twenty-five to thirty paces away standing, but swaying on its legs like a drunkard. Whilst I held

my gun ready, the tiger fell down and died. I went through the usual, and absolutely necessary procedure of throwing stones at it, and when I was sure it was dead, called the others. But I did not greet them with smiles and congratulations; I was very, very angry. I am afraid I told both Mr. Purshe and Mr. Rehman exactly what I thought of them. I had never been so close to death before, merely because they had not observed the rules of shikar. Mr. Purshe begged my pardon and turned upon Mr. Rehman who had started it all by firing at such long range with a 12-bore. Poor Mr. Purshe thought he was saving my life by firing when the tiger came towards me. I had to cut short their recriminations because darkness was now rapidly falling and we still had to get the dead tiger through the jungle to the car. After a little homily about split-second timing making all the difference between life and death of the shikari, which I suppressed my anger to deliver, the sun had set and we made haste to transport the tiger to the road and hurriedly piled it into the car and so back to Betul.

On many occasions I have shot tiger when entirely alone in the jungle, but I have only once done so with so much ease and in so short a time as happened at Ghatwideo.

Jangli, a shikari of Pachama village who had fields in Ghatwideo, informed me that every day a tiger leaves Ghograkol, comes up to Ghatwideo and goes through the forest line to the village. He asked me to shoot it. I said I would come one of these days but made no promises.

One day when I was going back to Betul from Itarsi, about 9 p.m., I remembered this and stopped near Ghatwideo to have a look round. I went to Jangli's place and called him but got no response, so assumed he was probably out in the fields. It was a bright moonlit night and I was thinking of continuing my journey when I heard stags cry out from near Ghograkol and I knew the tiger was approaching. I sat down near the junction with Ghatwideo, behind a tree, fitted my torch to the barrel, adjusted it and waited. In less than ten minutes I saw the

tiger walking up the line exactly as Jangli had described. It walked proudly, like a king, looking neither to right nor left, softly, the graceful ripples of his coat a fascination to watch. When it was three to four paces off I switched on the torch and as it turned to look at me I shot it in the shoulder with the '577. It rolled over but could not stand up. I reloaded just in case, but it was dead.

Tigers, however, are not always so easily bagged, and I have had many disappointing shikars. One in particular, in January 1947, started off badly and finished up the same way.

News was brought of a kill of a cow near the village of Pachama, sixteen miles from Betul. In company with a Mr. James, A.D.E.O., I set off, on a motor-bike. Mr. James was driving and I was on the pillion. On the way we stopped to call on Dr. Peter at Padhar. When we set off again, the bike skidded on a patch of sand left on the road by the Public Works Department and we were both thrown off. Mr. James was rather badly injured and I had injuries on my hands and legs, and the clutch of the motor-bike was smashed up. I pulled myself together and we got a lift from a passing truck to the place where the beaters were assembled. Despite his injuries, Mr. James walked six miles and we had been through two fruitless beats when a Gond, along with the forester of Arjungondi, arrived with the news that when three bullock carts from his village, with two passengers in each, were leaving the village a tiger attacked the third and last cart. It pulled at the bullock but the harness was too strong to break, so it dragged the bullocks, the cart and the passengers a considerable distance until the cart struck a tree. The impact set the bullock free and the tiger hauled it off, leaving the other bullock, the cart and the passengers unharmed. A lady was inside the cart with pots and pans purchased in the market and these fell out helter-skelter along with the occupants. The drivers of the other carts came after them and raised a hue-and-cry, and when they saw that the tiger had dragged the bullock only a little distance away and was standing over it refusing to move further, they

lit fires, which scared it away. They brought another bullock from the village and continued their journey.

The Gonds informed me that the kill was still lying there and they had covered it with leaves. Mr. James was quite unable to go any further, so he remained in the jungle whilst I went on the three miles to the bullock kill. From the pug marks I saw it was a big male tiger; I told the Gonds to remain there quietly and I went on in quest of the animal, saying I would not need either a beat or a machan but would shoot it on sight. After a short distance, in my bare feet, I saw a very big tiger running at a distance of about eighty yards. I ran after it for about twenty yards, hoping that when it stopped I would get a good target, but it went up a steep hill covered in thick bush. Running back to the Gonds I asked them to circle the hill and stop the tiger from the other side, if possible beating it back to the kill. But the tiger had already crossed the hill and was standing in a nala preparing to climb another hill. The Gond went up the hill to try to drive it back but the tiger went across the off-side of the hill and disappeared from sight.

I returned to Mr. James and we sympathized with each other agreeing that it had indeed been a bad day.

During the mid-summer when the heat becomes unbearable, many of the water-holes dry up completely and then the animals have to traverse long distances to quench their thirst. On such an evening, when I was indoors, a peon from the D.C.'s house came to inform me that a panther had invaded the house and that the D.C. was away at his club; the Mem-sahib and the children were terrified.

I went immediately to the D.C.'s house with a loaded gun, expecting to find the panther roaming about in the compound. In the meantime, the District Commissioner, at that time Mr. A. W. Khan, came from the club and together we, too, roamed the courtyard with a torch. The previous night the panther had killed a dog and eaten half of it. The other half had been left lying in the compound and now the panther had come

for its second course, but unfortunately the D.C. had seen the vultures feeding on the remains of the carcase and had asked his peons to throw it away. It had been dragged out past the front door of the bungalow and the panther had tracked the scent there. Then the Begum and the children saw it and screamed and shouted until it went away—just before I arrived.

The next night the panther killed a buffalo near the distillery and in front of the bungalow of the D.E.O. on the outskirts of the town. When this Officer returned after the second show at the cinema, about 1 a.m., he saw something white in front of the house. He shone his torch on it and saw a panther eating the intestines of a buff. He raised a shout but the panther just sat there and in a short time the Sub-Inspectors and others congregated but the panther didn't care a damn, it continued with its meal. They sent for the Stationmaster who lived nearby and had a gun. He fired twice and missed and the panther then strolled away.

A few days later, Bhura, a fisherman of Betul, who used to fish in the Khedia tank, told my agent that at a rock near Kalapatha, only a mile from the city, two tigers were quarrelling. I sent for the fisherman and said surely it was bears or hyenas, tigers do not come so close to the town; perhaps it was a panther, for panthers are mating just then and become bold and careless. Anyway, I decided to go and have a look. My Munim, Raghunath, accompanied me along with the fisherman. When we came to the hillock where the rock was I stationed the two men there and went a circuit of the hill. When they saw me uphill of the rock they were to come towards me throwing stones to drive the tigers to me; which they did, but unfortunately a panther emerged and went off to the right into some bushes. I deliberated whether I should go after it or encircle the bushes and get it from the other side, and then I remembered that it had a mate, which had not yet appeared, so I stayed where I was. In a few minutes I saw a male panther, as big as a tiger, coming towards me across the rocky slabs. It stopped and stared and when it turned slightly left,

I fired my .577 full in its neck and it commenced the eternal sleep. I called to Raghunath, several times, but got no answer and then the fisherman called out from a tree to ask if the tiger was dead. When I confirmed this, he too started calling for Raghunath, and said he was on a tree a long distance away. When he finally arrived, he was trembling violently and his dhoti was very torn. His teeth were chattering but he managed to get out that the fisherman had told him that one shot meant that the tiger was wounded and there would be hell to pay, so they took to the trees, but Raghunath had run about wildly and kept tripping over his dhoti and tore it again scrambling up the tree. But they helped me tie the panther to a log of wood and I asked them to carry it to the city, where we all arrived very dishevelled from the exertion of transporting our weighty burden. In the city, I told Raghunath to load the panther on a rickshaw and take it to the D.C.'s house, informing the D.C. that he, Raghunath, had killed the panther which had visited his compound and that the D.C. should reward Raghunath. Raghunath took the panther to the D.C.'s house but told him that Jamshed had caught the thief that dared enter the sacred precincts of the distinguished house. The Begum and the children were shown the panther and they said they recognized it as the one which had been in the compound. The D.C. said it was incomprehensible how I could have shot a panther because I had been talking to him only an hour before. Raghunath had to have his little joke; he told the Begum that the panther's residence was quite close to the D.C.'s and that Mrs. Panther was still alive and kicking and would be calling to look for her husband.

The last week of December brought the depth of winter; the sun which in summer-time rose at 3.30 a.m. did not make its appearance until after 8.30 a.m. and even then it had no warmth and all the earth was covered in frost.

On this particular day there was a strong, icy wind blowing and cold, snowy rain was falling. I went to bed early, wrapped

in a thick shawl, trying to keep warm. About 9 p.m., just when I was beginning to feel drowsy, my servant came to say someone was waiting to see me. I swore at him for waking me up and told him to inform the caller I would see him in the morning. When the servant said that the man had brought news of a tiger, I jumped out of bed and went to listen to his story. His cow had been killed only a few hours previously in the jungles of Chikhlar, three miles from Betul. I told him I couldn't do anything in this heavy rain and biting cold and asked him to return in the morning when I would kill the tiger. I went back to bed, but regretted that I had not gone with the man; the animal would probably be on the kill now. I spent a restless night and woke up very early in the morning, at 4 a.m., unable to sleep any more, so I went out for a walk. I returned when daylight broke and found it was going to be a fine day. I dressed and waited impatiently for the Gond to return. When he came I told him to set off at once and I would follow on a bicycle, and I cycled to the D.C.'s house because I wanted this tiger to be shot by Shri K. L. Verma, now Deputy Commissioner, who was extremely anxious to bag one.

Then I went on alone to examine the kill and found the tiger had dragged the cow for half a mile after killing it. The Gond said that there were two tigers and they had been fighting towards the close of the night. Whilst I was searching for the pug marks a man came along in a bullock cart and said I was wasting my time looking there—he had seen the tiger on the other side of the hill where he had gone for firewood and he had to return with an empty cart for fear of it.

It was now about 9 o'clock in the morning and I returned to Betul as I had some Court work to attend to and I wanted to bring Shri Verma back with me. I said to the Gond that I would return at 11 a.m. When I went to the D.C.'s house I found he had gone to Multai and would be back at 3 o'clock. I sent one of my servants to Chikhlar with my guns and told him to wait there. When I had finished my Court work I went back to the D.C.'s house but as there was no likelihood of him

returning before 3 p.m. and it was beginning to get too late for shikar, I decided to go alone. I got to Chikhlar at 3 p.m.; the men were sitting around impatiently waiting for me so we went over to the hillock at once. I asked five men to go behind the hill and beat the forest and I put three men on the stopline. After five minutes a loud roar was heard and the Gonds threw away their drums and went up trees. The roars continued to echo from one end of the jungle to the other, the monkeys started chattering and all the birds commenced crying and squawking and in the midst of the uproar the tiger came galloping down the hill about twenty yards to my left. When I shot the tiger it was in the air in the act of leaping and it went topsy-turvy over before falling to the ground. It tried to get up but couldn't so it dragged itself to a nearby bush. Now I had to keep eyes in both sides of my head—to watch for the appearance of another tiger and to see that the wounded one did not recover and charge. After a few minutes the beaters came over the top of the hill so I knew there was not another animal coming and then I turned my attention to the wounded one. It was lying at a distance of thirty-five yards from me and when it saw the beaters it stood up on its front legs but I quickly put another shot into it and it died. It was 4.30 p.m.

I asked the Gonds to load the tiger on to a bullock cart and take it to my home. Then I returned to the District Court. I found the clerks coming out of the Court and they looked at me with my gun and asked what on earth was I doing with that in Court. When I told them I had just killed a tiger, they laughed to split their sides—they themselves had seen me in the Court at 3 p.m. I told them just to wait and see. The Gonds arrived with the tiger in the cart about 6 p.m., beating their drums and shouting and turning the event into quite a parade. Everyone stood up to watch and applaud and that evening thousands came to my house to have a good look at the tiger. At villages like Rahatgaon, Lodhidhana, Padhar, etc., there was nothing unusual in a shikari returning with a tiger or a panther,

BECOMING A SHIKARI

but in Betul city where, because of my wartime and other appointments, I now had my headquarters and residence, it was a very different matter and sufficiently remarkable to draw a crowd of spectators.

Chapter Eight

Professional Status

NO business can thrive under constant neglect and from about 1947 one crisis after another arose in my forest contracting and it became necessary to close down branches, until by about 1950 there was nothing left. Fortunately, I came into contact with the firm of Allwyn Cooper, Limited, Nagpur, who arrange shikar expeditions for visiting sportsmen, and I was employed by them as organizer and shikari.

In November 1952, Mr. Saul Blickman of New York City, accompanied by his wife, came to India for tiger shooting. The shooting camp was set up in the village of Tokra in the Betul district of Madhya Pradesh. We tied calves for baits from Tokra—at Panchi, Pat, Tanda, Gawasen—to Khurchana; at twelve locations in all.

Word of the first kill was received from Jhiria Doh, but as I had some urgent business to attend to at Betul on that day, another shikari took Mr. Blickman to the machan for shooting. The retired Head Constable, Shahbaz Khan, sat beside Mr. Blickman on the machan. At about 8.30 p.m., while the tiger was hovering around the machan and the bait, natives from camp brought Mr. Blickman's tiffin to the machan, and, of course, the tiger ran away. Mr. Blickman was so annoyed that he promptly hurled the tiffin in the direction of the kill and announced that he had not come all the way from the U.S.A. to take dinner on a machan. He upbraided the servants so severely that even if he desired food brought to him in the future it was very unlikely that he would get it.

The following day when I returned to the camp from Betul I was regaled with the story, so I was very relieved when news of another kill came from Pat, a distance of four miles from Tokra. I knew that conditions in this village for arranging a beat were not very good; in fact, the Gonds had frequently said that a beat could not be arranged at all. I told Mr. Blickman I was not in favour of sitting over a machan after darkness but would rather go and visit the locality, select a location for the machan, and arrange a beat for that very day.

At Pat, I discovered that the tiger had dragged the kill inside a nala, and I actually saw the tiger moving through the jungle. I selected a place for driving the tiger where there was dense forest and long grass, but I know I could not depend upon the local Gonds.

I returned to Tokra and went back to Pat with Mr. Blickman and Mr. Shukla, the Managing Director of the Allwyn Cooper Company. We constructed the machan and Mr. Blickman and I sat down on it. Mr. Shukla gathered his own beaters. I had positioned the machan at a height of ten feet and Mr. Blickman was very concerned about it being so low, especially as the front had been left quite open; he was afraid the tiger might leap up, but I assured him there was no danger. I gave him all the usual instructions I give to someone I have not had shikar with before, but Mr. Blickman did not require much advice. Although he had never shot tiger before, he had done a lot of safari-ing in Africa, and had experience of shooting lions, elephants and other game.

After the beat had been in progress for about twenty-five minutes, Mr. Blickman was the first to see the tiger, which appeared near the spot I had indicated as being likely. It was 200 yards away and Mr. Blickman steadied his gun, waited until it was about seventy yards away, and when I told him to fire at the shoulder it went down at the first shot. It tried to get up again and Mr. Blickman fired once more, striking it between the eyes. I also fired, at its chest, and the tiger did not move. Mr. Blickman shook hands with me and commenced

patting me on the back, then he got up, threw both his hands into the air and started shouting—he was as happy as if he had acquired a kingdom. In his happiness he had forgotten that he was standing on a machan and not on solid ground, and the machan shook violently. I was so apprehensive that I asked him to keep still but in his exuberance it fell on deaf ears.

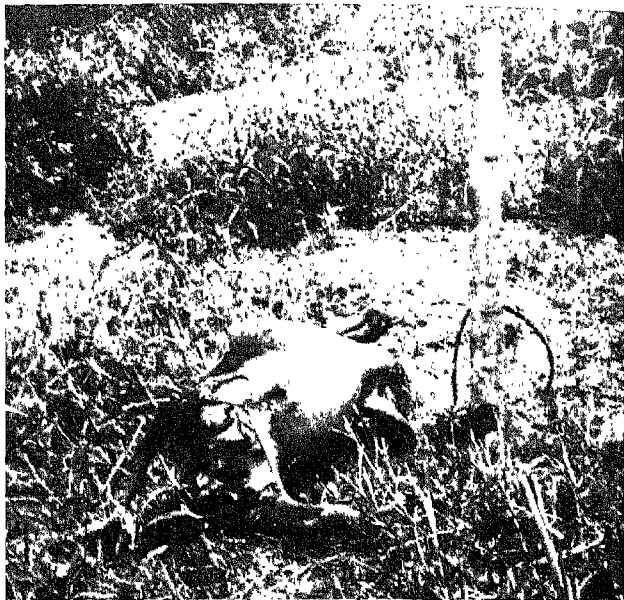
In the meantime the beaters came and I directed them to keep away from the place where the tiger had fallen. We let down a rope ladder and climbed to the ground, and with guns ready went towards the tiger. It was dead. It measured 9 feet 9 inches. Mr. Blickman then demanded to know the wages of the beaters. When I told him they were paid one rupee each, he requested that they be paid two rupees each on his account.

After that we had news of a kill at our camp at Tokra. The tiger had killed a bullock near a nala very close to the village. The village Mukaddam said that the tiger was accustomed to sit in this nala and all we had to do was to go and wait for it. It was a deep nala with very steep sides and quite unsuitable for shooting the tiger inside it. I told Mr. Blickman it was no good constructing a machan at such a place and he agreed so we arranged a beat. Mr. Shukla wanted to stay with us but as it was not advisable for three men at a time to sit on the ground, I asked him to climb a tree just behind us. The beat was a failure and the tiger did not appear, so we had no choice but to erect a machan for the night. At about 8 p.m. a hyena came and started to eat the kill; when I told Mr. Blickman it was a hyena, he could hardly believe that I knew from the sounds of eating whether it was tiger or hyena, especially on a pitch-black night. I shone my torch down and he saw the hyena, and shot it before I could request him not to do so. It was no use sitting on the machan any longer so we returned to camp.

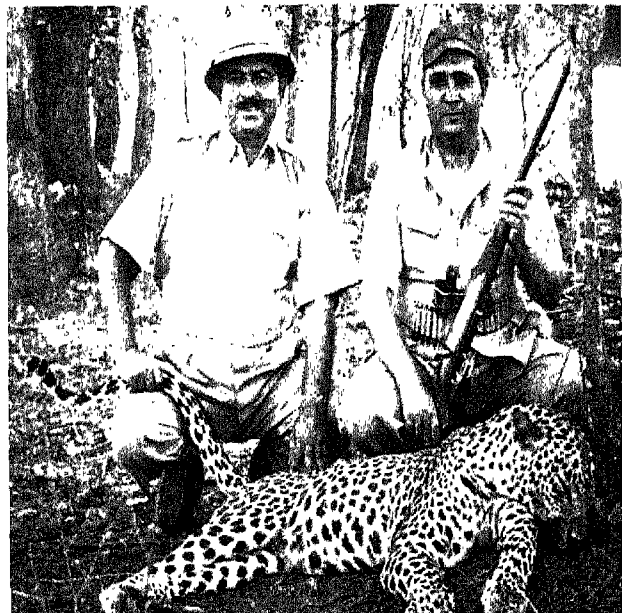
The following day we heard of a kill at the village of Teliadeo, near Khurchana, so off we went. Mr. Shukla asked me to sit with Mr. Blickman in a machan. The Subedar of Bordha wanted to accompany us as a spectator, but as I will



Roped to one side of Mr. M. J. K. Sullivan's car bonnet is a dead tiger, to the other side a dead bear



A tiger's victim



This leopard was shot by Mr. G. B. Singh, Director of Civil Aviation

not allow more than two on a machan I asked him to climb a tree. He didn't want to do this, so he sat down with the stoppers on a rock a short distance from us. He did not know that we could overhear his conversation and when he began to make jokes with the Gonds, being one of those "life of the party" characters, and to quote poetry to them, I whistled twice to warn him to keep quiet. But his radio broadcast continued even after the beat had started and the tiger, who was listening to this poetry recital and the Subedar's fairy tales, decided that he wanted no part in the debate. He made his exit through the right-hand stopline despite the frantic efforts of the stoppers to arrest him. But the continued tree-tapping and the clapping of the stoppers in their attempts to turn it, made the tiger lose his temper. It was the King of this domain and free to walk anywhere it liked; who the hell were the stoppers to prevent it? His roar resounded through the entire forest and Mr. Blickman steadied his rifle expecting the arrival of the tiger, but it had already crossed the stopline and it was gone through the heavy underbrush with some flashes of bright yellow and roars diminishing in volume as it gained the oblivion of distance.

Soon the beaters came up and with them Mr. Shukla who asked us why the tiger ran away. When I told him, Mr. Shukla, ever the diplomat, said it was better not to tell either Mr. Blickman or the Subedar the reason. Mr. Blickman would be angry and the Subedar would be extremely upset, and, after all, Fate has to take the rap for lots of things we mortals do.

We were quite glad, however, to hear of a kill at Kamanbandi, near the village of Tanda. This is a very good place for shikar and in the past I had shot three tigers there in one day.

I took Mr. Blickman there and selected a mahua tree on which the machan was set up. The local Khuddi shikari objected to my selection of a mahua tree, saying that the tiger would not go that way at all, but would make for the nala, so he had a machan put over a bamboo grove, in spite of my protests. The jungle was extremely dense and heavy and vision

was restricted to a very small area. The beat started, the tiger came out and passed right under the mahua tree on which I had wanted the machan placed. The stoppers tried to hold it but it growled so fiercely that they were all terrified and those on the trees did nothing at all except sit trembling. The tiger vanished through the tall grass and the bamboo grove and it was impossible to pinpoint it for a shot.

Mr. Blickman was very disappointed, but I told him that the machan had been erected against my will in the wrong location. He couldn't say anything because he had suggested, when it was being done, that as the Gond shikari lived in the district and knew the area, to avoid any quarrel with him we should agree. So once again we all kept our thoughts to ourselves and hoped for better luck next time.

Almost as though fortune was rewarding us for our tolerance, we were hardly back at Tokra when a tiger killed a prize bullock belonging to the Mukaddam, when the bullock had gone to drink at a nala about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. The bullock was full-grown and a strong, heavily-built animal; its cries had been heard at the house of the Mukaddam quite a distance away. The whole family had run to the spot and when they arrived the tiger was still there feeding on the bullock. When they drew near, it ran off. When they came to tell me, I scolded them for frightening the tiger away—if they had left it feeding it would have been so simple for Mr. Blickman to shoot it right away. The Mukaddam suggested erecting a machan and waiting for it to return. I didn't think it would come again after being scared off, but to please the village headman, we erected a machan and sat there until 10 p.m., but the tiger, as I expected, did not return. It did not come through the night at all, because next morning the bullock was lying as it had done the night before. We tried again the next night but with no luck. Later, Mr. Blickman reimbursed the Mukaddam for the loss of his prize bullock and won a place in the gratitude of the Mukaddam of the village of Tokra.

This same tiger killed a buffalo near the camp. There was no spot suitable for a beat and the tiger's pug marks could not be found in the long grass, so we were compelled to erect a machan on a harra tree. Although it was carefully put up, some distance from the kill and well covered, this wily old animal gave us the slip again, although I knew from the cries of the monkeys that it was about.

Some days later we heard of the depredations of a tiger near Lokhar Talai. It would kill bullocks in broad daylight while spanned into carts, come right into the cultivated fields in the very heart of the village and terrorize all the natives. Since I had to go to Betul, I asked Mr. Shukla to visit Lokhar Talai and ascertain the facts so that Mr. Blickman could be taken there if the information proved correct. Shahbaz Khan and Mr. Shukla visited the place and decided to arrange beats; it was reported that the tiger had been wounded several times in the past.

The next day I took Mr. Blickman there. The Patel of Banka Bedi saw us and said that the tiger was an absolute terror and, furthermore, that several important sportsmen, including the Assistant District Magistrate of Harda, had tried to shoot it. I told the Patel that he was descended from a warrior clan and it was surprising that, being a real old warrior himself, and having a medium calibre rifle as well as a reputation as a great shikari, he had not killed it himself. He replied that it was so big and so fierce that he would not dare attempt to shoot it. In a lordly manner I replied that I had killed 152 tigers to date and if the Patel cared to show me the tiger I would make it the 153rd. I also said that we would shoot it on the ground without the trouble of a machan, but he became annoyed and said I was talking utter nonsense. I continued to argue with him until the Patel thought it would be a good idea to seat me in such a location that I was bound to be destroyed by the tiger.

I took Mr. Blickman the following morning to shoot black bucks, whilst the arrangements for the beat were being made, and, when completed, we left the village of Banka Bedi at

8 o'clock in the morning. The Patel took us to a spot on the eastern side of the village near a nala where the tiger had killed a cow and a calf the previous evening. From the behaviour of the vultures on the tree-tops I knew that the tiger was not very far away at that moment. Leaving the beaters, we went on with the stoppers. The Patel had everything arranged and decided beforehand. He pointed out the direction in which the tiger would emerge out of the nala, where it would cross open ground and where he wanted Mr. Blickman and me to sit. The tiger would, he said, pass at 100 yards, come inside the nala, and then come within fifteen yards of our position. The Patel then moved away a distance of about seventy-five yards accompanied by Mr. Shukla and took up a position on a big rock. Although Mr. Shukla is a young and inexperienced shikari, he has more guts than many an experienced sportsman. On the side of the nala where Mr. Shukla was seated, the bank rose slightly, and I decided to take up a position there with Mr. Blickman a few yards above me. I told Mr. Blickman that if he should spot the tiger he was to shoot over my head, whilst I would act as a deterrent if the animal was wounded and charged. Mr. Blickman then changed his position and sat immediately to my right; he shoots left-handed and whilst able to cover the ground in front and to his right could not readily aim to the extreme left; I could cover this as I shot right-handed. I had a strong sense of responsibility for Mr. Blickman for we were shooting from the ground and only three feet above the bottom of the nala with no protection of any kind in front of us.

As soon as the beat started he never blinked, nor winked even an eyelash and the slightest motion of a leaf or a breath of wind filled us with extra alertness; our eyes began to water with concentration. We had expected the tiger out in twenty minutes but as the minutes ticked by it seemed like hours and I began to worry in case the tiger had taken a different course. All at once a merest whisper of sound came to us through the nala; hands steadied, guns pointed. Mr. Blickman turned his

head slightly to the right and there was the tiger, twenty yards away, not in the nala, but crossing from the brush to the nala. Mr. Blickman nudged me with his left elbow, by which time the tiger was in the nala and only ten yards away. Mr. Blickman fired and the ball pierced the neck; I had also taken aim and the two shots rang out almost simultaneously; the beaters, still in the distance, thought there was only one shot. My bullet had also pierced the neck and for a few seconds the tiger did not move, then it twitched a bit, made some noises and was dead. Mr. Blickman, not so sure as I was that life was extinct, fired again between the eyes and this shot broke the skull to pieces; I restrained him from further action, pointing out that he would spoil the skin and that an animal always takes a last stretch as a reflex action before death. Mr. Shukla arrived and then the beaters trickled in, and Mr. Blickman, although a mature sixty-five, behaved like a youngster of twenty. He danced and took long leaps through the air and then took out his diary, seated himself on the tiger, and began making notes. The tiger was 10 feet 6 inches long and we judged its weight at about 800 pounds. Mr. Shukla said that the tiger had passed by his position at a distance of fifteen yards and he would have shot it himself if it had not been reserved for Mr. Blickman. We were only half a mile from the village, and soon the villagers began streaming in. They built a platform of bamboo cane on to which they rolled the tiger and it took twenty men to carry it up the steep hill to the top of the plateau above the river bed. When it was loaded on to a bullock cart and taken to the centre of the village, the entire population, men, women and children, crowded round exulting as the animal was transferred to our jeep. There was more rejoicing at Tokra on the part of the villagers, and especially on the part of Mrs. Blickman who was filled with apprehension every time her husband went after his tigers.

The following day Mr. Shukla and Mr. Blickman came to join me at Lokhar Talai where I had seen the pug marks of another tiger, but this beat was a failure.

Towards the end of January 1954, Mr. Shukla informed me that two Americans, Mr. J. Dennison and Mr. A. Leclerc, were coming to India to hunt and that the Makki block in Baihar Range in Balaghat district was reserved for them. They would arrive in the first week in February, so I went to the area a week in advance. I decided to prearrange places for the beats and selected suitable spots. Two machans were put in readiness at each of the twelve places and I marked the trees where I wanted the stoppers to sit.

The first day the hunters arrived a bait had been killed on the main road leading to camp. I fixed up a machan and asked the sportsmen to come with me to sit over the bait and wait for the return of the tiger. I warned them they would be required to sit until 10 p.m. Mr. Dennison agreed to accompany me and we went at 6 o'clock and shortly after dark, at 8 p.m., we saw the tiger come stealthily to the bait and commence to eat. I asked Mr. Dennison to get ready to shoot and threw the torchlight beam on the tiger. As soon as the light hit the tiger it took a jump and hid behind a bush. Alas, it was an old, experienced tiger, and knew the ropes. We could see only its eyes gleaming in the darkness, but too far off for proper aim. I turned off the light with the hope that it might return to the kill, but at 10 p.m. it had not done so and we gave up for the night.

The following morning Mr. Dennison and I went out in the jeep to take a close look at the tiger's footprints to determine whether or not we could still track it down. When we returned at 8 a.m. Mr. Shukla informed me that Mr. Leclerc was dissatisfied because there was only one shikari and he did not care to hunt under those conditions. If another shikari could not be provided then he would give up the hunt. I told Mr. Shukla not to worry about it and I would try to explain things to Mr. Leclerc. This I did, and I said I would share my time with him and Mr. Dennison, and that I was the only shikari in India who could guarantee to produce tigers for him. If he went to another camp there would be no such guarantee.

He seemed satisfied and on that day he succeeded in shooting a spotted deer and a mouse deer, which cheered him up, and he said he would give things a try.

Fortunately, the tiger which Mr. Dennison and I sat over now made another kill at Naugadra village. We had machans fixed up and made all the preliminary arrangements. I took Mr. Leclerc on one of the machans at about 11 a.m. and put Mr. Dennison on the other with a local shikari, called Kale Khan. Once we were settled, I told Mr. Leclerc the route I thought the tiger would take and where it would come out and told him the best spot to shoot it. He asked me to fix the beaters and stoppers so that the tiger would come out in front of Mr. Dennison, but I said it would have to happen as I had arranged it and nothing could be done now. He found it hard to believe I could know the exact spot where the tiger would appear. When we heard the beaters coming in our direction I cautioned Mr. Leclerc to be absolutely prepared for my signal. When the tiger appeared and I signed, he broke its backbone with his very first shot. The tiger fell, roaring, and tried to move further on two feet. I told Mr. Leclerc to keep firing to be sure that the tiger could not crawl back towards the beaters, but despite the fact that Mr. Leclerc fired twice, it kept moving and I had to fire with my .470 to finish it. It was an exceptionally big one, the second largest ever shot by the company's clients; it was 10 feet $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches long. Mr. Leclerc was very proud and received congratulations from everyone around, but declared that I was a magician to make tigers walk wherever I wanted them.

Mr. Shukla, who was at the camp that day, returned to headquarters and sent another shikari to the camp for Mr. Leclerc. When Mr. Francis, the new shikari, arrived, Mr. Leclerc told our camp manager, Mr. Rege, that he did not want one as he was quite satisfied with the present arrangement. Mr. Rege then, on my advice, sent Mr. Francis on to the advance camp at Supkhar where Mr. Ruark, another hunter from America, was to hunt.

The third day we heard of a kill of one of our baits near the village of Goran and we prepared to go there. Mr. Leclerc asked me to sit with Mr. Dennison in order that he might get a tiger. I did that and Mr. Leclerc mounted the other machan with Kale Khan. In about twenty-five minutes the tiger came out at the spot I had indicated to Mr. Dennison, who fired and hit the tiger on the backbone above the shoulder. It continued to crawl towards our machan and both Mr. Dennison and I fired shots which finished it. It was a tigress 8 feet 6 inches long. Mr. Dennison was quite contented although it was not so big as the first one.

The next kill was at Sondar village. Like a good little boy scout, Mr. Leclerc suggested I arrange the beat so that Mr. Dennison would have a shot at the tiger, his first one being smaller than Mr. Leclerc's, but I was to sit on the machan with him whilst Mr. Dennison had Kale Khan. The tiger duly came out in front of Mr. Dennison and he shot it in the neck. He had used a .375 with a telescopic sight when the tiger was only twenty yards away. The bullet hit only the flesh and not the bone. Kale Khan also fired but he missed. I climbed down from the machan, counselling the two hunters to remain where they were, and found the tiger, wounded, had made off. I followed the tracks with Kale Khan for a distance of a furlong but then they went into long grass and it was too dangerous to proceed. We returned to the hunters and said we would search for it next day.

Next morning, we procured several buffaloes and followed the blood marks for about two miles from where it was shot and then came upon rocky country which the buffaloes could not negotiate. A short distance away was the entrance to a cave. I took Kale Khan and a Baiga man and told everyone else to stay behind. We found plenty of pug marks and blood near the entrance but the tiger was not there. If its wound had been severe it would have remained in the cave, so we gave up the chase as I thought it would recover.

A few days later we heard that bisons were coming to drink

every night at a small lake close by. After I had verified it, we had a machan built near the spot and went to sit in it just before dark. At about 8 p.m. the bison came and Mr. Leclerc shot the biggest male bison. I had a spotlight trained on it and it started running towards the woods; Mr. Leclerc continued firing and after five shots it went down.

In coming to the spot where Mr. Leclerc shot the bison we had seen tiger pug marks, so I told him we would shoot it in a day or two. I had four tiger baits tied up in this vicinity the next day. The tiger killed one of them the first night but then retreated down the road a couple of miles. The district was such that a beat could not be arranged—there were too many water-holes and hiding places which were impossible to beat satisfactorily. As an alternative we would sit over the kill in a machan. We arrived at 5 p.m. When the stags started with their noises I expected the tiger to come quite soon, but it didn't. It must have seen or heard us; I could hear it roaring in the distance and I also knew that there was another bait tied in that direction which it would take instead of returning to the original kill.

Mr. Leclerc and I remained in the machan until 1 a.m. when he heard Mr. Dennison coming down the trail from a jungle spot where he had been in search of bison (couldn't let Mr. Leclerc be one up on him), so we joined him and all went back to camp.

The following morning we went to the kill and after I had roamed about for a bit, I decided the tiger had not left this section, so I arranged for the beaters. Two machans were constructed for Mr. Dennison and Mr. Leclerc. Then the inevitable question arose as to who was to shoot this tiger. Mr. Shukla, who was also there, wanted Mr. Dennison to do it. I told him it was the turn of Mr. Leclerc as Mr. Dennison had already killed one tiger and injured another. Mr. Shukla replied that Mr. Leclerc had also driven away a tiger while sitting on a machan the night before, and since Mr. Leclerc had killed a bigger tiger than Mr. Dennison, Mr. Shukla ordered me to

place Mr. Dennison so that he could kill it, and asked me to stay with Mr. Leclerc. This time I insisted that Mr. Dennison should take my .477 and I placed Kale Khan with him after indicating the tiger's route. In about half an hour after the beat had started I heard two shots fired by Mr. Dennison and said that he had surely shot the tiger. Mr. Leclerc and I got down from the machan, went to Mr. Dennison's machan and found the dead tiger lying there, so we warmly congratulated him.

These two hunters were very good shikaris. They shot three tigers between them, a bison and many deer, stags, spotted deer, black bucks, peacocks, fowl and other birds. One day I took them to the Kana Kesli sanctuary in the Mandla district to photograph wild life, and I found them as expert, and as happy, with their cameras as they were with their guns.

In 1954, another American, Mr. C. Canzil, came for shikar and I took him to the Chanda district. It was an extremely hot time of the year with temperatures at 115 degrees. As a reward for withstanding the terrible heat, he got a very good tiger and some wonderful wild-life photographs; like a real shikari, he shot his tiger from the ground.

In the same year, Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Ruark came to India. They were an exceptionally kind and considerate couple and treated everyone they came in contact with extremely well.

The first thing they did when they arrived was to test all our guns and then they adjusted the telescope sight on their own guns. They also explained to me how to do this and suggested that in future, whenever I had American clients, I should test their guns, which nearly always had telescopic sights, for them. The telescopic guns were, of course, new to me, and although I had implicit faith in my own type of gun and had no intention of changing it, I naturally thought it good business to learn as much as possible about other person's preferences.

After three days in camp there was no news of any kills and they did begin to get a bit impatient. I brought all my persuasion into play, promising them tigers without fail; I

knew there were at least eleven tigers in this district and that even I couldn't make a tiger eat if it wasn't hungry. Like an answer to prayer, there was a kill the next day, and after visiting the spot I established that it was a male tiger, had dragged the calf some distance, had crossed the road to drink water at a wayside pool and returned to sit near the kill. I went back highly elated and promised Mr. Ruark a tiger this day. Mrs. Ruark had never seen a live tiger and I agreed to take her on the machan with us. We left at 12 noon and mounted the machan at 1 p.m. I showed them the direction in which the tiger would appear, and said it would come right in front of Mrs. Ruark. The beat commenced and when the tiger appeared it, unfortunately, saw the stoppers. Its roars simply cannot be described. It was an old hand at the game and it became frantically wild. It came towards us at such a gallop that I had never in all my experience seen anything so fast. It was quite unprecedented. It did not walk, nor run; it appeared to come through the air like a cloud, thundering and thundering over and over again. I knew Mr. Ruark would never be able to shoot it—he had never shot a tiger and never even heard one roar before—and if he attempted, and wounded it, it would ensure untold injury among the beaters and stoppers. I once had a cow which had given birth to a calf a few days previously, and upon hearing a tiger roar close by, had gone completely barren, the calf having to be given milk from another cow. I have known shikaris who, upon hearing such a roar, swooned, or laid down their arms and shut their eyes in a state of paralysis.

Suddenly, like a bolt from the blue, the tiger alighted right in front of the machan and simultaneously I heard two gun shots and saw the tiger lying on the ground. My hands, which had been lifted to prevent Mr. Ruark shooting, remained in the air, until I lowered them to pat him heartily on the back. My joy knew no bounds. Mr. Ruark was an intellectual and new to shikar, and it was simply amazing to hit an animal at such lightning speed. I kept on saying "Shabash" (bravo) and patting him on the back and during this period forgot all about

the tiger. It was injured, at a distance of forty yards, but when it heard me shouting my "shabashes" it dragged itself forward until it was fifteen paces from the machan, still roaring. I took a grip on myself and thought that very soon this happiness might turn to sorrow, so I asked Mr. Ruark to fire again and I also took a shot at it.

I asked Mrs. Ruark how she had felt, and she replied that she was horror-struck and God save all human beings from such an animal. I got down from the machan and found the tiger quite dead. Mr. and Mrs. Ruark were brought down and they stood by silently; I think there was a great deal of sorrow mixed with their triumph. On examination, the tiger was found to have a previous gun wound in its body.

The next day we heard that a tiger had killed a bullock near to our camp. I went to the place and discovered that, after killing it, the tiger had dragged it down to a nearby nala. There was some water in the nala and the remains of a previous kill and it appeared that the tiger made this its permanent abode. It was 5 p.m. and too late to arrange a machan for that night, but as I knew the tiger would not go away from the bullock, we could arrange a beat the next day.

In the morning I took Mr. Ruark with me and after he had had a good look round, he decided to shoot the tiger from the ground, but as there was a lot of long grass all around and not sufficient clear space to see the tiger approaching, I persuaded him to sit in a machan, promising a shoot from the ground another time. I put the machan only seven feet from the ground. Forty-five minutes after the commencement of the beat the tiger approached, walking majestically towards us and at forty yards Mr. Ruark shot it with his .470 at the joint of the shoulder and neck. It stumbled about like a drunk person and I advised Mr. Ruark to fire again with his .308. It fell dead; this tiger did not roar and rush about because it had had its fill of bullock and was lethargic.

On Holi day, a festival when there is much eating, drinking and carnival and coloured water and mud is thrown at persons

passing by, no kills had been fastened the previous day, because I knew that there would be no beaters available. However, a drunken coolie had fastened a bait unknown to us and a tiger came to make the kill. Even had the beaters been willing to work on Holi day, I certainly did not want tipsy ones, so I went to the fellow who had fixed the bait and asked him to bring sober labourers for the beat. He was very drunk and told me that as he had done his duty it was now my turn to do my duty and arrange my own beat, and he refused to go. I told Mr. Ruark that all the beaters were making merry and no doubt the tiger was doing likewise and feeling so cheerful that it might come out without our having to arrange a beat. We decided to sit on the ground beside the kill but Mr. Ruark got apprehensive and thought that perhaps the tiger might not be quite so cheerful as I predicted. I went to a distant village and collected some sober labourers in the jeep, then the Bega shikari from the village came along and said no beat was to be arranged on this day. Some females also arrived and began beating the men with sticks. It is customary on Holi day for the Gond females to receive presents from all and sundry, and if you do not oblige, they beat you with sticks, although gently. We paid the women two shillings each and they went away. Next, I realized that my "sober" men were as drunk as owls. One of them, who could not drive, got into the driving seat of the jeep and declared he would drive it straight into the cave of the tiger; some mounted on the bonnet and urged him to start up, others stood up in the trailer of the jeep and refused to sit down. It was with the greatest difficulty that I was able to drive the jeep because they kept catching hold of the steering-wheel, and some would climb out of the trailer and offer to assist us. I could only go about ten miles an hour for fear someone would tumble off. When, after much difficulty, I reached the place, another jeep had already brought some men so there was now quite a number collected. I went back to camp to fetch Mr. Ruark, but all in vain. The stoppers refused to go up the trees and the beaters refused to beat. I offered them

a barrel of liquor if they would obey my orders and if the beat was successful.

We finally got started, Mr. Ruark and I sitting on the ground, but when the tiger appeared the stoppers were fast asleep on the tree-tops. When the tiger roared at the foot of their trees, they woke up, made a terrific hue-and-cry which the tiger shared with them, and then it ran off. The beaters then arrived and everyone started abusing everyone else; Mr. Ruark watched them, very amused, and then we went back to camp leaving the men to their fun. The tiger was safe in the jungle—or so we hoped for the beaters' sake.

The following day I took Mr. Ruark sixteen miles away to a spot where there were black bucks in plenty. We intended to return at night. But because of the heat and rush of air we had faced driving rapidly in the jeep, Mr. Ruark's eye became inflamed and we went back at 3 p.m. We found intensive preparations going on for a machan and a beat. A natural kill had been reported and they wanted everything to be ready for us.

We went up on the machan and at 8 p.m. the tiger came stealthily towards the kill. It commenced biting off the hair of the buffalo with its two front teeth. A tiger, before beginning its meal removes the long hair of buffaloes, boars and other thick-coated animals, and it does it so precisely that they appear to have been shaved; next, it carefully strips off the skin and then starts to eat. Then is the time to shoot. Mr. Ruark took aim and hit it below the neck with his .470 and it fell, presumably dead. I switched off the torchlight, and Mr. Ruark lit a cigarette whilst I patted him on the back. We jumped about and laughed and talked, and suddenly the "dead" tiger sprang up, roaring and running wild. We were only ten feet from the ground and I was filled with fearful apprehension, but fortunately it went off in the opposite direction roaring loudly and destroying everything in its path. I called in all the beaters and we returned to camp—the speed the tiger was moving it would be a mile away before we had started to move.

The next morning I collected thirty buffaloes and went after it. We found that on receiving the injury the tiger, contrary to my supposition, had only gone about seventeen yards and then lain down for some time. There was a lot of blood and hair of the buffalo calf which must have come out of its mouth; then it had gone on again. The buffs followed the blood track for about a mile and came to difficult country, the grass was long and the marks indistinct. We left them behind and went on in front; now and again a man would go up a tree to have a look round. We went on for another mile when it became humanly impossible to proceed so we went back to camp at 1 p.m. intending to continue the search at four o'clock.

In camp I felt very feverish—I knew it was not malaria nor a cold, and wondered if it was the fever of disappointment. I had a temperature of 102. I generally have 100 degrees of temperature and 102 did not appear sufficient to keep me from the beat, so I went in spite of protests. We could not lay our hands on the wounded tiger and on return to camp my temperature had risen still further and I had cramp over my whole body. I stayed in camp the whole of the next day and Mr. Ruark went out and shot a bison. Mr. Ruark had more luck in shikar than any other sportsman I have known; he rarely had to wait long for his objective to appear and it almost stood up and waited to be shot. He had very big bags of deer and other animals.

After we had spent some time in the Supkhar Range, I took Mr. Ruark to the village of Taurenga in the Raipur district to shoot water-buffaloes. This animal is as wild and strong as the African rhino; it can receive as many as ten bullets and not fall. It is the highest in stature of any animal in this Province, being six feet high and weighing about a ton and a half; its skin is $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches thick and the distance between the two horns is 110 inches.

Mr. Shukla had appointed Charan Singh, a Gond shikari of that village, to make arrangements and told me to act under his instructions, as he was an old, experienced shikari in this branch of shikar.

For five days he took us out into the jungle in a jeep and made elaborate arrangements for a beat but nothing further transpired. Whenever I complained he would lose his temper and threaten to go away and leave me to do it myself. I felt like driving him away but then remembered the orders of my director and I had to keep quiet.

On the sixth day, the old shikari wanted us to carry our food as he intended arranging beats for the whole day. Raipur district is a warm place and the temperature rises up to 112 degrees during this month of March. He took us into the jungle at 7 a.m. and started chalking out a programme, not finishing this conference until 11 a.m. I told him he was keeping us waiting far too long and he again threatened to leave, and, moreover, I said if we did not get a water-buffalo today, I would do as I pleased the next day onwards.

He took Mr. Ruark and me some distance and seated us over a stone where there was not a spot of shade. We had to sit on this hot stone until 2 p.m. in the broiling sun. The beat took about two hours to start and nothing came out. Mr. Ruark was perspiring from head to foot and was very uncomfortable indeed; he would change his position frequently and try all sorts of ways to sit—we wondered what sins we were being punished for. Mr. Ruark was a gentleman and never got annoyed, but I know some American tourists who would have shot the shikari dead by then. Finally, I asked the shikari the reason for the great delay and he said that on account of the great heat, one of the messengers he had sent to collect the beaters fell asleep half-way there. When no beaters arrived he sent another man to the village to collect them and they had then started the beat.

When I took Mr. Ruark to the jeep, he took off all his garments, shoes and socks and sat down in his underpants drinking water frequently and refused any food. He was very red in the face and his hands looked as though they had been scalded. I was very sorry for him and extremely annoyed with the Gond shikari. Mr. Ruark declared that he was quite done

up, did not want any more sport, and only wanted to go back.

In camp I apologized to Mr. Ruark for this treatment and I had one request to make. He had been under the command of the Gond shikari for six days; if he would come with me the next day for only six hours, he would get his buffalo. He consented and said he had every faith in me.

It was agreed we would leave camp at 5 a.m. Mr. Rege asked about the arrangements for breakfast but I told him that none need be made beyond fixing a trailer to the jeep in which to bring back the water-buff, and that I would be back by 10 a.m.

That night I prayed to God that He would not fail me in this endeavour, and I prayed again when I arose at 4 a.m.

We reached the jungle at 5.30 a.m. and I found the beaters, whom I had alerted the previous evening, already there. I left Mr. Ruark whilst I scouted around and in a very short time saw a herd of water-buffs. Leaving two men there I returned for Mr. Ruark and we erected a machan. I started off the beat and in about twenty minutes the whole herd was running at full speed at a distance of fifty to sixty yards. Mr. Ruark shot the biggest buff which was leading the herd. He struck it on the neck and the buff went down like a mountain. It was lying in tall grass and so quiet that I thought it must have run away again, but presently I saw the grass moving. I got down and asked Mr. Ruark to direct me, from the machan, to the spot where the buffalo was lying. It was impossible to see into the long grass when on the ground. I had my .577 with me. I saw the buff at a distance of five to seven feet—it looked as if an elephant was lying on the ground and was as cold as a stone. I was amazed, because it is almost impossible to kill it with one bullet—this bullet had gone through its neck. I congratulated Mr. Ruark with the greatest of sincerity and I still think he is a wonderful shikari.

We cut off the buff's head and it took four men to lift it when we loaded it on to the trailer. We were back at the camp at 9 a.m., when I started blowing the horn to announce

our victory, but Mr. Ruark would go one better by firing thrice into the air. This brought out everyone in camp and Mr. Rege embraced me, and said, to use the vernacular, that we had saved his bacon, and he could look Mr. Shukla in the face again.

At about 1 a.m. we struck tents and Mr. Ruark said he would like to drive the jeep. The driver sat behind him, and when Mr. Ruark drove between fifty and sixty miles per hour, he jumped up and down and beseeched Mr. Ruark to slow down and be more careful. We reached Nagpur in five hours over hilly and dangerous roads, a trip which always takes eight hours when there are no Mr. Ruarks at the wheel.

At Nagpur we took Mr. and Mrs. Ruark to the aerodrome to bid them farewell. They were the kindest people, and they said that if God wished they would return to India again.

Another American followed Mr. Ruark. He was Mr. Warren Page, the Shooting Editor of the American magazine *Field and Stream*, and he brought with him another gentleman who was a photographer. Mr. Shukla had reserved two shooting-blocks for Mr. Page, Jinganur and Somanpalli in the Somanpalli range of South Chanda district on the Indravati River. The teak forest at Somanpalli is very dense and six miles below camp the celebrated River Godavari meets the Indravati and the scenery is exceptionally beautiful. There is a good Rest House situated on a little hill and the weather was hot and dry—it was April.

On the third day following Mr. Page's arrival at Somanpalli, reports were received of three tiger kills near the village. It was arranged that beats of two of the kills should be made that day and to beat the third kill the next day if the tiger fed on it during the night.

On the first beat Mr. Page and myself went on one machan and on the other Mr. Shukla and the photographer. I pointed out the likely route of the tiger and where Mr. Page could get his shot, and told the photographer where to start taking

pictures. The tiger came in twenty minutes after the beat started, paused as it crossed the nala, and that was its undoing. Mr. Page fired his .375 Weatherby Magnum and the tiger died instantly. I told him to shoot again to reassure the beaters.

Unfortunately, when the tiger crossed in front of the photographer, Mr. Shukla would not allow him to take pictures lest the noise of the camera scare off the tiger. This tiger measured 9 feet 10 inches.

We went immediately to the second beat, but the tiger did not appear. It was not surprising; the first beat had raised the usual hue-and-cry amongst the fowls and peacocks and any intelligent tiger could take a hint. However, going through the motions of a beat had been a splendid opportunity for our photographer friend and although he did not get one of the tiger, he filmed some jungle sequences which, I have no doubt, would be very rewarding.

The next day Mr. Page and I took a round in the jeep. The third kill, from the pug marks, showed only a small, or female tiger, which Mr. Page thought would be no sport to shoot. Instead, we saw a very old and very heavy bull bison at a distance of about sixty yards which, firing twice in quick succession, Mr. Page successfully dropped.

This same day we had news that a panther had made a kill near the village of Aser Ali. At sunset, I took Mr. Page to the spot and seated him on the machan. Unwisely, we had neglected to bring the big spotlight and I had only the flashlight torch. The panther arrived at about 8 p.m. but the light did not fix him instantly and he ran off.

Subsequently, Mr. Page shot a good male panther, 7 feet 5 inches, in a night patrol, and later, again in a night patrol, he killed a male tiger 9 feet 8 inches long, shooting it at less than fifty feet while standing by the roadside. It took the combined efforts of Mr. Page, myself and my two assistant shikaris, Din Mohammad and Manohar, half an hour to work it up on to the rear of the jeep.

Some nights later, Mr. Page fired at a panther running

through a teak plantation, but it got away. About 6 o'clock in the morning, we went out to search for it and found blood marks but not the panther. As we were tracking the animal, it commenced to rain heavily so we were forced to abandon the search then, but set out again later with thirty men from the village. For over two hours we searched but our efforts were in vain which was a great disappointment since sportsmen like Mr. Page and I will never let a wounded animal escape if any effort can prevent it. For instance, one night Mr. Page fired at a nilgai (blue bull) standing deep in the jungle. It fell but recovered and disappeared into the dark. The next morning we commenced the search at 6 a.m. and I finally tracked it down at 12 noon, when Mr. Page finished it off. The night following this adventure with the nilgai he killed another panther at very close range.

Before he started hunting in the Somanpalli Range, Mr. Page had been to Taurenga in the Raipur district for water-buffaloes, and especially for a very large bull which other sportsmen had seen but been unable to bag. I told Mr. Shukla frankly that in Taurenga I would not work under the command of Charan Singh, the local shikari, and that I must make all the arrangements myself. Mr. Shukla agreed on condition that Charan Singh was placated, and I had to promise Mr. Shukla that I would not offend this black demon of Taurenga.

With the photographer, Mr. Page reached Taurenga at eight in the evening—I had preceded them by one day. Avoiding Charan Singh I made inquiries among the locals and finally fixed the most likely spot for it to appear. I told Mr. Page we would start off at 6 a.m. the next morning, and if everything went according to plan and God's wishes, we should return by 11 a.m. after shooting the big water-buff.

Unfortunately, Charan Singh also turned up at the appointed hour and kept us company. He took over the planning of the beat and wanted us to lead the beaters towards a dry river nearby as he thought the bull would drive there. I told him that during the day a bull would certainly never dare to come

into such open ground and decidedly would not cross a large sandy bank in full sunlight. Charan Singh did not agree and to support his opinions he brought forward three Gond shikaris who, naturally, had to stand by him. As I had promised Mr. Shukla that I would not upset Charan Singh, I had to abide by this decision of his, but when I told Mr. Page he agreed with my view, that the bull would turn back into the jungle 150 yards from our positions and would not cross the river.

Soon after the beat started, the bull tried to escape into the jungle to our left but the stoppers succeeded in diverting it, and then it came running across our front at a distance of 150 yards where we could not see it, but only hear it crashing very fast through the jungle; it was impossible to shoot at it. The stoppers tried their best to turn it, but it was useless.

I suggested to Mr. Page that we return to camp for a meal and then try another beat. We started at 2 p.m. and had built the machan by 3 p.m., setting it 300 yards from the open river bank. Mr. Page, the photographer and myself all went into the machan, and after about forty-five minutes of beating, a big bison and three females ran before the photographer, giving him plenty of time to take his pictures, but I advised Mr. Page not to shoot this bull, as a much better one could be got in the Somanpalli area. When they ran off, the water-buffalo, our much-hunted friend for whom we were waiting, came to the spot. When I saw him at a distance I took him for a small animal and at first told Mr. Page not to shoot. But when it approached nearer I found that it was indeed the one we wanted, with a huge pair of horns. Mr. Page fired twice in quick succession and the bull fell—a very fine old buffalo with horns measuring 102 inches from tip to root.

After the Somanpalli part of his shikar was over, Mr. Page drove back with the camp staff to Nagpur. On the way we halted at a Rest House by the Wainganga River, in an area where a small species of black buck was known to feed. The next morning I requisitioned a bullock cart driver to drive through the fields looking for these black bucks and I went

ahead in the jeep making inquiries at every village as to their whereabouts. After I had passed the fourth village I came across a herd of them. In the group were two males, one a well-grown black and the other a small red, and half a dozen females.

On spotting them I turned the jeep and sat in an elevated position, sending the driver back to bring Mr. Page, and in the meantime I climbed a tree to keep them in sight. I had a view over the whole countryside.

At about 11 a.m. Mr. Page with the photographer arrived. I sat at the wheel of the jeep and asked Mr. Page to keep his rifle ready and we drove off slowly. At a distance of 300 yards from the herd, Mr. Page asked me to stop to allow him to shoot at the buck in case the whole band scatter. I assured him they would not run away and in spite of his protests drove up to 200 yards of them, and Mr. Page fired. His bullet went slightly high and the antelope started bouncing away in a big circle across the plain. I told Mr. Page to stand ready because they would probably pause again, which they did on hearing the jeep horn. The bigger buck this time went down; we took it to camp and then started for Nagpur.

After his return to America, Mr. Page wrote to express his appreciation of my assistance, and praise from a man who has hunted all manner of big game from brown bears in Alaska to tigers in India, and who is one of the finest of woodsmen, is something to warm the heart of a man in my profession.

Mr. Blickman and Mr. and Mrs. Ruark, Mr. Dennison, Mr. Leclerc, Mr. Hewetson, and many others, wrote encouraging and appreciative letters to me, and I hold many dozens of unsolicited testimonials given to me by sportsmen I have had the pleasure to accompany, both from my own district of India and from abroad.

One letter in particular I was very honoured to receive, and although not in connection with shikar, it gave me great happiness. I reproduce it here:

PROFESSIONAL STATUS

Mr. Jamshed Butt,
Honorary Extra Assistant Recruiting Officer,
Betul, Central Provinces and Berar.

Since the beginning of the war you have been carrying on recruiting work in an honorary capacity in the Betul District, often in the face of most disheartening conditions. You have travelled widely in the district, addressing people in the towns and villages and impressing upon them the need and advantages of recruitment.

I hereby confer upon you the title of Khan Saheb as a personal distinction.

(Signed) WAVELL, E. M.
Viceroy of India.

New Delhi,
1st January, 1944.

Mr. Ruark, however, gave his journalistic talent a humorous twist when he wrote in an American magazine, in April 1954, the following:

The vice-president, in charge of keeping me un-mauled, is a sturdy type who is named Khan Saheb Jamshed Butt and the spelling is correct. Khan Saheb looks like an old-fashioned Turkish wrestler, with moustaches to match. He is fifty-one years old and has been a shikari hunter since he was twelve. In his life he has shot 153 tigers and has supervised the shooting of 300 others. That is a lot of tigers.

K. S. Jamshed Butt got his honorary title of Khan Saheb for some work he did in some local trouble quite a few years ago and also getting the best tigers for the best visiting firemen that England used to entrust to his care. Some of the people who have tigered this range have been the Duke of Connaught, and untold Viceroys, Rajas and now me. That seems a come-down both for the Supkhar Range and Khan Saheb.

One of the things that additionally fascinates me about K. S. Jamshed Butt is a Watson .577 hammer double rifle, which is as old as he is and is considerably less well preserved. A .577 hurls a bullet about the size of a cucumber, and if he ever has to loose it off in my presence, I am sure I will faint. Better the tiger, because Khan Saheb's cannon is literally held together with string.

Appendix I

FLESHING AND SKINNING

QUITE a few sportsmen do not know how to dispose of the flesh of the animals they shoot. If you want to preserve it for future consumption, you should first open up the belly and remove all contents, as soon as the animal is shot. To preserve, see Appendix II.

During winter, a dead animal does not decompose for thirty to forty-eight hours, according to the severity of the cold, but during summer it will keep for eighteen to twenty-four hours only. In every case, whether intending to skin only or to flesh and skin, the trophy must be kept out of the hot sun and not left on hot ground. It should also be kept away from water and dew, neither should you drag it to its destination, but must carry it and not allow any blood to touch the skin of the animal.

While skinning, a clean spot should be chosen and the dead animal placed over a mat, wooden platform or a clean slab of stone, so that its skin will not be spoiled with dust and earth. The flesh must be removed completely from the skin, and the skin then folded after a thorough rubbing with common salt has been done. Leave the skin like this for sixteen hours in the shade after which it should be opened and stretched and rubbed with salt again. Fold it again and leave for another eight hours. After this, if the skin turns white it should be presumed that it is satisfactory, but if it turns red or blue, it requires further rubbing with salt. If the skin gets dry it should be rubbed with salt water.

When the skin has turned white, stretch it on the ground by

APPENDIX I

using nails or wooden pegs and when partially dry it should be folded again with the hairy portion inside. If the skin is being sent away, the hairy portion should be treated with D.D.T. powder. This will keep the skin from decay for several months, but during the rainy season it is very difficult to keep it from spoiling.

To extract the fat of a tiger, the best way is to cut the flesh into small pieces, and along with the fat adhering, put into a pot of water and boil until the flesh is tender. Allow it to get cold and then lift the fat off the surface. Put the fat into a pan and boil again to evaporate any water, and bottle. Tiger fat starts going rancid after two to three months.

Lucky bones of tigers and panthers are to be found on the joint of the shoulder and neck towards the chest.

To clean the skull, boiling removes all the flesh, but the brain has to be removed and this is effected by pushing it out with a stick and then pouring boiling water through. Over-boiling causes the teeth to drop out and the lower jaw might split into two pieces, so to avoid this it is better to boil for a short time and then remove the flesh with a sharp knife. If, however, there is no hurry, the skull should be kept inside an anthill for two or three weeks when the ants will have left the skull absolutely clean.

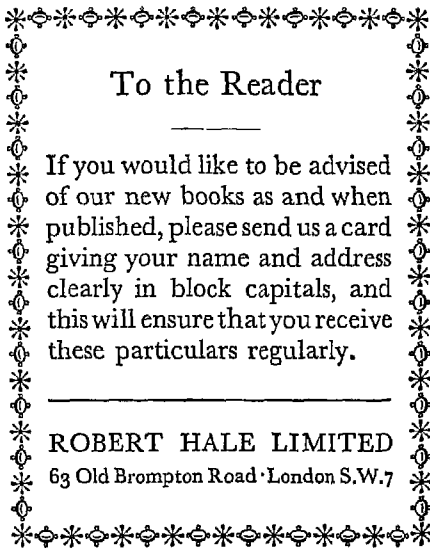
Appendix II

CONSUMPTION AND PRESERVATION OF FLESH

THE flesh of all kinds of deer is very good to eat. For immediate consumption, use the heart, kidneys and liver, and the best way to cook them is by frying, not boiling. Cut into small pieces and mix with salt, chillies and lemons, then compress, with the aid of a stone, into cakes or rissoles, place on iron rods or bars and cook over a charcoal fire. This is a most delicious dish and has great tonic value.

To cook the flesh, first put some ghee and onions in a pot and place the pot in the oven; when the onions are browned, add the flesh along with salt, chillies and spices. Cover the pot lightly, not allowing the steam to escape, and cook in a medium-heated oven. Stir occasionally. Alternatively, a pressure cooker might be used if available. The most nourishing part of the animal is the muscles. Testicles of a male animal should be cut into pieces and fried; they make a delicious dish. Soup made from the leg bones is very nutritious, especially for weakened or invalid people. The flesh should not be washed after being cut into pieces unless it has become soiled.

If the flesh is to be preserved, put legs and pieces of back into vinegar and salt for two days, then boil in its own steam. When the steam has evaporated, spread the meat in the shade to dry. This is fit for consumption for several weeks. Or the flesh can be cut up into strips before cooking, and hung up to dry in the sun; this way it will stay wholesome for years.



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